A MORAL

ESSAY

Concerning the

Nature and Unreasonableness

OF

PRIDE:

IN WHICH

The most plausible Pretences of this VICE are examined,

IN A

CONFERENCE

BETWEEN

Philotimus and *Philalethes*.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

READER.

I Eaſily foreſee ſome People will be diſobliged with the Freedom of theſe Papers, and think themſelves treated with too little Ceremony; But unleſs they can diſarm their pretended Adverſary, and confute his Arguments, I would deſire them by all means to ſmother their Reſentments: For as bad as the World is, to appear in defence of Pride, and turn Advocate for the Devil, looks like an untoward ſort of an Employment. However to ſweeten their Humour as much as may be, they may pleaſe to conſider that there was no good to be done in this Caſe without plain dealing; This Malady of all others muſt be well examined, otherwiſe it's in vain to expect a Cure. 'Tis to no purpoſe to declaim in general againſt a Proud man, and to give him a great many hard Names; for unleſs you point directly upon his Vice, diſtinguiſh it's Nature, and diſcover the weakneſs of that which he builds upon. Every one will be ſure to avoid the Charge and parry againſt the Application. Farther, to abate their Cenſure I think it not

improper to acquaint them that here are no particular Characters attempted, nor is there the leaſt intention to provoke or expoſe any Perſon Living. Beſides when a Piece like this is drawn from ſo many different Faces; *the mixing of Features and Complexions, will keep the* Originals *from being diſcover'd. In ſhort the Deſign of this ſmall Diſcourſe is only to make Men more uſeful and acceptable to Society, and more eaſie to themſelves than they generally are: And that thoſe who over-top their Neighbours upon any conſiderable account; may manage their Advantage with that Modeſty and good Humour, that none may have any juſt occaſion to wiſh them leſs.*

A

Moral Eſſay

UPON

PRIDE,

IN A

CONFERENCE

Between

PHILOTIMUS and PHILALETHES.

Philot. PHilalethes, I am glad to ſee you, though you are ſo wrapt up in Speculation that I ſcarce knew you at firſt ſight; pray why ſo thoughtful? you don't uſe to have ſo much Philoſophy in your Face.

Philal. I have a particular reaſon to look a little pretendingly at preſent; therefore I hope you will excuſe it.

Philot. With all my heart, for I ſuppoſe you will not make a practice of it: But what-

ever Emergency you may be under, I would adviſe you to appear in your old ſhape again; for in my Judgment that contemplative Figure does not become you.

Philal. I am ſorry to hear Thinking agrees ſo ill with my Conſtitution; but I hope this Alteration does not ariſe from any natural Antipathy I have to Senſe, but from the unacceptableneſs of the ſubject I am upon.

Philot. Pray if it be not too free a Queſtion, what were you muſing upon?

Philal. Why laſt night I happened to light upon an overgrown Fop, who plagued the Company with ſuch an impertinent Hiſtory of his Quality and Performances, and was ſo vain and inſolent in all his behaviour, that as ſoon as I was delivered from him, I had a plentiful occaſion to conſider the unreaſonableneſs of Pride; which is the preſent Employment of my Thoughts, and upon a full view, I find ſo much folly, and ill humour, and Monſter, in the Compoſition of this Vice, that I am aſhamed, and almoſt afraid, of the *Idea* I have raiſed.

Philot. 'Tis ſomewhat hard you can't ſtand the charge of your own Imagination; But though I ſhall not diſpute your Courage, yet I much queſtion your Mortification.

Philal. The Reaſon of your cenſure?

Philot. Becauſe I have obſerved it's but a bad Sign of Humility to declaim againſt Pride;

Pride; for he that is really humble will be unconcerned about Reſpect and Applauſe; ſuch a Perſon values himſelf upon nothing but his Conſcience and Integrity, and therefore the haughtineſs of another can't make him uneaſie; ſo that if he finds himſelf wince upon the account of neglect, he may be pretty well aſſured he has a ſore place.

Philal. I think you are ſomewhat out in your notion of Humility; for that virtue does not make us either ſervile or inſenſible, it does not oblige us to be ridden at the pleaſure of every Coxcomb. We may ſhew our diſlike of an imperious humour, as well as of any other fooliſh Action, both for the Benefit of others, and in vindication of our own right.

Philot. I am glad to hear this conceſſion from you, becauſe from hence it follows that a man may have a juſt eſteem of himſelf without being proud: Now if this obſervation was remembred and rightly applyed, men would not be ſo cenſorious in this point, nor miſtake their own Pride for their neighbours ſo often as they do. For inſtance, a man whom the Law has made my Superiour, may take notice of his Quality if he pleaſes; but this can't well be done, except he makes me an abatement of the regard he receives from me, therefore I ought not to interpret the *Reſerve* or *Familiarity* of his Car-

riage, as a Neglect, for provided he keeps within his proportion, he challenges nothing but his own; ſo that if I am diſpleaſed, the Pride lies on my ſide, for affecting to have an equal Regard paid to perſons who are unequal.

Philal. I have nothing to object againſt the main of your diſcourſe, and conceive that the beſt way to know whether we are guilty or not, and to prevent charging this odious Imputation unjuſtly upon others, is to ſtate the Nature of Pride, and to enquire into the Grounds of it.

Philot. I confeſs that is the way to pinch the Queſtion, therefore let what will come of it, I will ſtand the Teſt of your Method, though I am afraid you will ſay ſome unacceptable things.

Philal. Suppoſe I do; if the ſubject leads me to it, the fault is not mine: But to come to the point: Pride has a very ſtrong Foundation in the mind; it's bottom'd upon Self-love.

Philot. Then I find there is ſomewhat to work upon. ——

Philal. Pray give me leave, I ſay Pride is originally founded in Self-love, which is the moſt intimate and inſeparable Paſſion of humane Nature. The kindneſs men have for themſelves, is apt to put them upon overvaluing their own things: which humour unleſs

leſs check'd in time, will make them take moſt delight in thoſe Circumſtances and Actions which diſtinguiſh them from their Neighbours; and place their ſuppoſed Advantages in the beſt light. Now this deſign is beſt purſued by being Maſter of uncommon Excellencies, which though deſired by all, are poſſeſſed but by a few; for the Rareneſs of things raiſes their Eſteem, and draws a general Admiration. And their deſire of being diſtinguiſh'd, is one reaſon why they love to keep the odds in their own hand, and to make the diſtance between themſelves and their Neighbours as wide as may be, which often runs them upon a vain, and tyrannical Oſtentation of their Power, Capacity, *&c.* For this magnificent diſcovery makes the difference between them and their Neighbours the more apparent, and conſequently occaſions their own Greatneſs to be the more remarkable.

Philot. I think you have ſaid ſomething very remarkable, and I don't know but you may grow conſiderable by it, if you can prove your Aſſertion.

Philal. Pray what riſing Doctrine have I laid down?

Philot. You ſay that Pride is founded in Self-love, which is an unſeparable Paſſion of humane nature; from whence I gather, that it's impoſſible for a man not to be proud, be-

cauſe it's impoſſible for a man not to love himſelf. We are like to have an admirable Preſervative from you at this rate.

Philal. Not ſo faſt, If you had attended to the whole, you might have obſerved that by ſelf-love I meant the Exceſſes of it.

Philot. I thought a Man could not have loved himſelf too well.

Philal. If by loving you mean wiſhing himſelf happy, I agree with you; for we may, or rather we muſt deſire to be as happy as is poſſible, provided it be without prejudice to another. But then if Eſteem is underſtood by Love, it's eaſie (without care) to exceed in our own behalf; and in this ſenſe we certainly do love our ſelves too well, as often as we ſet an overproportioned and unuſual value upon any thing becauſe it's our own; as if our fondneſs and partiality was the true Standard of worth, and we had the faculty of turning every thing we touched into gold.

Philot. I will not conteſt this point any farther with you; but as I remember you ſtarted another Paradox, by intimating that it was a ſign of Ambition to eſteem any Excellency the higher for being uncommon: Now ſince the value of an Advantage is enhanſed by its ſcarceneſs, and made more reputable to the owner; I think it ſomewhat hard not to give a man leave to love that moſt which is moſt ſerviceable to him,

Philal.

Philal. So it would if he had no body to love but himſelf; but ſince he is both obliged and naturally inclinable to univerſal Benevolence, this alters the Caſe: for he who values any thing the more for being uncommon, will deſire it ſhould continue ſo, which is no kind Wiſh to his Neighbours, and is an Argument that a man does not delight in an Advantage ſo much for it ſelf, as for the Compariſon; not ſo much for its own irreſpective goodneſs, as becauſe others want it. Now it affords a more generous, and I believe, a more tranſporting pleaſure, to converſe with univerſal Happineſs, though we make no greater figure in it, than the reſt of our Neighbours; than to be gazed at, and admired by a Crowd of indigent and inferiour People.

Philot. The World does not ſeem to be of your opinion; however I will let your Argument paſs for the good nature of it. But after all let me tell you, though I have no mind to be counted proud, yet I have a ſtrong fancy for myſelf, and therefore if you will not allow me to be civil to my Perſon, we might e'en as good diſpute no farther, for——

Philal. Don't trouble your ſelf, if your Terms are moderate, we'll never break off upon the ſcore, therefore I will offer at a ſhort negative deſcription of Pride, in which

if it's poſſible, I will give you Satisfaction.

Philot. Pray let us ſee how liberal you will be.

Philal. Firſt it's no part of Pride to be conſcious of any perfections we have, whether intellectual or moral; for this is in many Caſes neceſſary, and impoſſible to be avoided. He that is wiſe or learned muſt know it, otherwiſe he can't underſtand when he judges true or falſe, nor diſtinguiſh difficult and noble Speculations, from trifling and vulgar Remarks, nor tell when he acts rationally or not. Now a Man that is ignorant of theſe things can neither be wiſe nor knowing: Therefore as he that has a juſt and vigorous ſenſe of the Magnitude, Diſtance and Colours of Objects, muſt conclude that he has eyes whether he will or not; ſo theſe perfections of the mind diſcover themſelves by their own Light. The Poſſeſſour can no more be ignorant of them, than he can doubt of his Exiſtence when he is awake. To give one inſtance more; How can any Perſon have true Fortitude, who does not know how far he ought to hazard himſelf, and wherein the baſeneſs of Cowardiſe conſiſts? So that to affirm a Man may be ignorant of his own conſiderableneſs, is to make him wiſe and great, and good by Chance, which is a contradiction to the Excellencies ſuppoſed in him.

Philot. Right. And ſince I like the Frankneſs, and tendency of your Argument, I'll try if I can reinforce it: I ſay then, ſuppoſing it was poſſible for a man to be ignorant of his good Qualities; it was by no means convenient: For if he carried ſuch a Treaſure about him, without knowing how well furniſhed he was; its ſomewhat hard to conceive, how he could either improve or uſe it. If it lay thus cloſe, it would be little better, than a Mine undiſcovered, for which neither the owner of the Ground, or any Body elſe are ever the richer,

Philal. You ſay well, and therefore I ſhall venture in the ſecond place to affirm, That as we may be acquainted with our own Accompliſhments, without being guilty of Pride, ſo neither is it any branch of this ſin to diſcover that they are greater than ſome of our Neighbours enjoy. If we have a real Advantage over another, it's no ſin to be ſenſible of it; to apprehend otherwiſe, is to judge contrary to the Reaſon of things, when the Caſe is plain, we may believe we have more Honeſty, Senſe, *&c.* than ſome others. This is as allowable as it is for us to think, that we have better Complexions than Moors, and are taller than Pygmies.

Philot. Can you go on?

Philal. Yes, I'm not afraid to add, Thirdly, that we don't fall into the ſin of Pride, by

by being delighted with thoſe Advantages of Mind, Body or Fortune, which Providence has given us; theſe things in the very notion of them are ſuppoſed to be beneficial. Now it's natural and neceſſary for us to be pleaſed with the Enjoyment of that which is good; of that which is agreeable to our Faculties, and an Advancement of our Nature: To ſpeak ſtrictly, when the Faculty and the Object are rightly proportioned, Satisfaction follows of courſe, and its as impoſſible for us not to be pleaſed, as it is for fire not to aſcend: Farther, if we are not allowed to take any Satisfaction in our condition, we are not bound to give God thanks for it, ; for we are not obliged to be thankful for that which does us no good: But nothing can do us any good, except it be by giving us a pleaſure either in hand or in proſpect. Fourthly, it is no part of Pride, to be more pleaſed with having an Advantage our ſelves, than by ſeeing one of the ſame value poſſeſſed by another.

Philot. Make this out and you will oblige me.

Philal. Very well: I prove my Propoſition thus. Firſt, Becauſe that which is in our Poſſeſſion, or incorporated into our Eſſence, is always in our Power, and ready to be made uſe of when we think fit. But that which belongs to another is often at a diſtance, and out of our reach, and can't be communicated to us, though the

the owner was never ſo willing. Secondly, it muſt be more agreeable to be Maſter of any perfection our ſelves, than to contemplate one of the ſame nature in another; becauſe every one is more certain of the kind Inclination he has to himſelf, than he can be of the Affection of any other Perſon whatever: That I will be always kind to my ſelf, I am as well aſſured of, as that I have a being; but that another will be ſo, is impoſſible for me to know: And therefore let a man be never ſo good natured, it muſt be ſomewhat more ſatisfactory to him, to ſee himſelf well furniſhed in any kind, than his Neighbour. Thirdly, that which is our own and in our Nature, we have the moſt intimate and vigorous ſenſe of; for the preſence of any deſirable Object, we know is more acceptable and entertaining than either the notion or Proſpect of it: Poſſeſſion gives us the Life of the thing, But hopes and Fancy can furniſh out no more at the beſt than a Picture finely drawn. So that, for Example, let a man be of never ſo generous and diſintereſted a Spirit, yet it's natural for him to be better pleaſed, withbeing rich himſelf (if he has any value for riches) than in having the bare Idea of an Eſtate: Beſides as I obſerved, that which is our own, is always at our diſpoſal, and does not depend upon the uncertain Inclination and humour of another. *Philot.*

Philot. Very comfortably argued. I find then by your diſcourſe that a Man may without vanity be pleaſed with his Circumſtances, and have good Thoughts of himſelf too, if he deſerves it. Now ſome People are ſo unreaſonable, that they will neither give Men leave to love, nor underſtand themſelves; if they are conſcious of any commendable Quality, they muſt be ſure to lay it out of the way that they may not ſee it; nay if a Man has taken never ſo much care to make himſelf inſignificant, in order to the promoting of Humility, they will ſcarce let him know he is good for nothing, for fear he ſhould grow conceited of his Virtue. But I perceive you are not ſo ſtrait laced, and pedantick in your Notions. Therefore if you can recover us no more Ground, let us know directly what Pride is, and be as fair as you can.

Philal. Why Pride in the plaineſt words which I can think of, is too high an Opinion of our own Excellency.

Philot. How ſhall we know when we over-rate our ſelves?

Philal. That is a very ſeaſonable queſtion, and abſolutely neceſſary to the ſtate of the Caſe: Therefore I ſhall lay down ſome indiſputable Marks of this Vice, that whenever we ſee the Tokens we may conclude the Plague is in the Houſe.

Philot.

Philot. Let us hear your Diagnoſticks.

Philal. Firſt, Then we may be aſſured we have this Diſeaſe, when we value any Perſon chiefly becauſe his advantages are of the ſame nature with thoſe we enjoy, neglecting others who have an equal right to Regard, only becauſe their Privileges are of a different kind from our own. For inſtance, when Men who derive their conſiderableneſs from the Sword, the Gown, or their Anceſtours, think none worthy their Eſteem but ſuch as claim under their own Pretences; In this caſe it's evident it can be nothing but Partiality and Conceitedneſs which makes them give the Preheminence.

Secondly, We may certainly conclude our ſelves infected with this Vice, when we invade the Rights of our Neighbour, not upon the account of Covetouſneſs, but of Dominion; only that we may have it in our power to create Dependencies, and to give another that which is already his own.

Thirdly, When Men don't meaſure their civil Advantages by the Laws of their Country, but by their own fancies, and the ſubmiſſions of Flatterers; this is another infallible ſign they are Proud.

Fourthly, to mention no more, When Men love to make themſelves the ſubject of diſcourſe: To conn over their Pedigrees, and obtrude the Blazon of their exploits upon the

the company; this is an argument they are overgrown with conceit, and very much ſmitten with themſelves.

Philot. Though I think you have hit the ſymptoms pretty well, yet except they are marked ſomewhat more diſtinctly, 'tis poſſible for a Man to have moſt of them without being e'er the wiſer. For unleſs we are able to draw up a juſt State of the Degrees of merit, we can never take the true height of our Pretenſions, and being in this uncertainty it's odds if ſelf Love does not make us determine to the prejudice of our Neighbours. Now I would gladly know how we muſt go to work to be ſufficiently informed in this Point.

Philal. We muſt endeavour to get right apprehenſions of the ſeveral Excellencies of humane Nature, and what proportion they hold to each other: In order to the aſſiſting our Judgment in this caſe I ſhall lay down theſe general rules.

Firſt, Thoſe advantages which ſpring from our ſelves, which are the effects of our power and courage, of our Induſtry or Underſtanding, are more valuable than thoſe which are derived, and borrowed, becauſe they are a ſign of a Richer and more active nature.

Secondly, Thoſe Qualities which are moſt uſeful ought to have the Preference: for ſince acknowledgments ought to be ſuitable

to

to the nature of benefits received, thoſe who have the largeſt Capacity of obliging, may fairly challenge the Perheminence in our Eſteem; and therefore in the third place the duration of an advantage ought to be conſider'd; And that which has the firmeſt Conſtitution and is moſt likely to continue, ought to be prefer'd to others which are brittle and ſhort lived. Theſe rules carefully apply'd will ſhew us how far our pretenſions to Regard are ſhort of, or exceed other Mens, and ſo prevent an over-weening opinion of our ſelves. However, we are to obſerve that outward Reſpect ought to be given according to the Diſtinctions of Law, and though a Man may happen to be very defective in point of merit, yet we ought to take notice of the value Authority has ſet upon him.

Philot. Give me leave to put in a word, which is to tell you, that though I am not ſatisfied with your Inſtances, yet I am glad to find you will allow us different degrees of worth. I was almoſt afraid you would have ſet all Mankind upon a Level.

Philal. To deliver you from ſuch apprehenſions, I freely grant you that the Diſtinctions of Quality ought to be kept up for the Encouragement of Induſtry, and the ſupport of Government. I hope now you have the reaſon of my Conceſſion, you will not be ſo ſuſpicious for the future.

Philot.

Philot. No, not till you give me a farther occaſion; eſpecially ſince the inference of your diſcourſe is not unacceptable: from whence it followeth, that when a Man ſees plainly that he has the Advantage of his Neighbour, he may let him underſtand ſo much without any offence to humility. +

Philal. No doubt of it, eſpecially when his ſtation is publick; but then the diſcovery of his ſuperiority ought to be managed with a great deal of Art and good nature, to which we are obliged not only in point of Complaiſance but Juſtice. For though there is often a real difference between one Man and another, yet the party who has the advantgae uſually magnifies the inequality beyond all Senſe, and Proportion. Men don't conſider that the great priviledges of humane Nature are common to the whole Kind; ſuch as being equally related to God and *Adam*, Reaſon and Immortality, the ſame number of Senſes, and much of the ſame perfection and continuance. And as for thoſe things which are the peculiar Advantages of a few; they are either acquired and enjoyed by the ſtrength of thoſe general ones I have mentioned, or elſe they are forein and in a great meaſure Chimerical, and therefore can be no real enrichments of our nature. They are often no more than the Bleſſings of Chance, of Flattery, and Imagination. And though they may

may ſet us upon higher Ground, yet they can add nothing to the true Stature of our Being. But to combate this Vice more ſucceſsfully, we'll examine its moſt plauſible Pretences, and ſee if we can diſcover the weakneſs of them.

Philot. What pretences are thoſe?

Philal. I mean Learning, Nobility, and Power; for theſe you know are accounted the brighteſt and moſt diſtinguiſhing Advantages. But though they ought all to be conſidered, yet I believe there is much more Weight laid upon them, than in ſtrict reaſon they will bear.

Philot. You talk as if you were retained by the Mobile, and had a Mind to bring us back to our original State of Ignorance and Peaſantry.

Philal. I tell you once again you are much miſtaken. I have no deſign to leſſen the value of any mans Honour, or Underſtanding: Let People have as much Senſe and Quality as they pleaſe, provided they don't grow troubleſom and ridiculous about it.

Philot. I ſomwhat ſuſpect you have a mind to engroſs this Vice of Pride to your ſelf. This ſort of diſcourſe looks like declaiming againſt Arbitrary Power, where the ſharpeſt Invectives are commonly made by the moſt Enterprizing, and unmortifyed Men, who are only angry that they are not poſ-

ſeſſed of that abſoluteneſs themſelves, which they endeavour to render odious in others.

Philal. Hah! you are ſomewhat ſmart. However let me tell you, if I have any ſuch project as you imagine, you have me upon a fair Dilemma. For, if my reaſons againſt Pride hold good, they will ſtand upon record againſt my ſelf, which I ſuppoſe will be no unacceptable revenge for you: if they are inſignificant, you will have the diverſion of laughing at the folly of the attempt: and which is more conſiderable, you may keep your good opinion of yourſelf into the bargain.

Philot. Pray begin your attack as you think fit, and for diſputes ſake I'll try how far I can maintain the ground againſt you.

Philal. Firſt then, Learning (to begin there) ill and High Conceit agree very well together: for a Man of Letters may have a clearer notion of the ſtupidneſs and deformity of this Vice, and being better acquainted with the frame and paſſions of humane Nature, he can't chooſe but diſcover how unacceptable it muſt make him to all Mankind. Beſides he is ſuppoſed to know that nothing in ſtrict reaſon deſerves a true Commendation, but a right uſe of the Liberty of our Will, which is in every ones power to manage to advantage.

Secondly, Learning gives us a fuller conviction of the imperfection of our nature, which one would think might diſpoſe us to Modeſty

ſty. The more a Man knows the more he diſcovers his ignorance. He can ſcarce look upon any part of the Creation, but he finds himſelf encompaſſed with doubts and difficulties. There is ſcarce any thing ſo trifling or ſeemingly common, but perplexes his Underſtanding, if he has but ſenſe enough to look into all the objections which may be raiſed about it. He knows he has a being 'tis true, and ſo does a Peaſant, but what this thing is which he calls himſelf, is hard to ſay. He has reaſon to believe, that he is compounded of two very different Ingredients, Spirit, and Matter; but how ſuch unallyed and diſproportioned ſubſtances ſhould hold any Correſpondence and act upon each other, no mans Learning yet could ever tell him. Nay how the parts of Matter cohere, is a Queſtion which it's likely will never be well anſwer'd in this life. For though we make uſe of the faireſt *Hypotheſes*, yet if we purſue the Argument home, we ſhall go nigh to diſpute away our Bodies, and reaſon our ſelves all in pieces. Inſomuch that if we had nothing but Principles to encourage us, we might juſtly be afraid of going abroad, leſt we ſhould be blown away like a heap of duſt: For it's no ſolution to ſay the greater parts of Matter are connected with hooked particles; for ſtill the difficulty returns how theſe Hooks were made? *Quis cuſtodiet ipſos Cuſtodes?*

Cuſtodes? What is it that faſtens this Soder, and links theſe firſt Principles of Bodies into a Chain? And as the more refined Underſtandings know little or nothing of themſelves, and of the material World; ſo upon Enquiry we ſhall find them as defective in their Skill about Moral Truths: (excepting thoſe who are taught by Revelation, which ſupernatural Diſcoveries the unlearned are capable of underſtanding, as far as their happineſs is concerned.) Thoſe who made Laws in their reſpective Countries, we have reaſon to believe had their minds poliſhed above the vulgar rate: And yet we ſee how unaccountably the publick Conſtitutions of Nations vary. The *Perſians* and *Athenians* allowed Inceſt, the *Lacedemonians* Stealing, and ſome *Indians Herodotus* mentions, uſed to bury their beſt Friends in their Stomachs. In ſhort, the Rules of Decency, of Government, of Juſtice it ſelf, are ſo different in one place from what they are in another, ſo party-coloured and contradictious, that one would almoſt think the Species of men altered, according to their Climates; and that they had not the ſame Nature in common. One would almoſt think that Right and Wrong lay rather in the Fancies of men, than in the reaſon of things, and was bounded more by Seas and Rivers, than by any unalterable limits of Nature; that Virtue and Vice were minted

minted by the Civil Magiſtrate, and like Coins would paſs for Currant only in his own Dominions. The Heathen Philoſophers may fairly be granted to have as good pretences to Learning, as any other ſort of men among them: And yet we may obſerve from *Tully* and *Laertius* what a ſmall Proportion of ſolid Knowledge they were Maſters of; how ſtrangely did they differ in Matters of the higheſt Import? How eagerly did they diſpute, and not without probability on both ſides: Whether there was any thing certain? Whether the Criterions of Truth and Falſhood were clear and indubitable or not? Whether the Government of the World was caſual, fatal, or providential? How many *Summum Bonums* have they preſented us with, ſome of them only fit to entertain a Brute, others noble enough for a Spirit of the higheſt Order? It were tedious to recount the differences one Sect had with another, their Inconſiſtences with themſelves, and the ridiculous and ill ſupported Tenets ſome of the moſt famous of them have held. Inſomuch that *Tully* takes notice that there was no opinion ſo abſurd, but was held by ſome Philoſopher or other. 'Tis true they could wrangle and Harangue better than the common People; they could talk more plauſibly about that they did not underſtand; but their Learning lay chiefly in Flouriſh, and Terms, and

Cant; for as for any real Improvements in Science they were not much wiſer than the leſs pretending Multitude. Indeed the more modeſt of them would confeſs that the chief uſe of Learning was to give us a fuller diſcovery of our Ignorance, and to keep us from being peremptory and dogmatical in our determinations. Now one would imagine the more intimate Acquaintance we had with the Imperfections of our Nature, the greater reaſon we ſhould have to be humble. Is Weakneſs a proper Foundation to erect our lofty conceits upon? Indeed he that has not the leiſure or capacity to examine how it's with him, may be fondly perſuaded to fancy himſelf ſomebody, and grow vain upon the kind preſumption; but for a man to be proud who can demonſtrate his own poverty, is little leſs than Madneſs.

Philot. If the caſe ſtands thus, to make all ſure, we had beſt get an order to burn the Twenty four Letters, and hang up *Cadmus* in Effigie; for—

Philal. Pray don't interrupt me, and I will try if I can give you a little Eaſe. Granting therefore, as we may, that Learning does give ſome advantage, and that our Underſtandings are really enriched by it; yet in regard we have but a few Principles to build upon, the greateſt part of our Knowledge muſt conſiſt in Inferences, which can't be wrought

wrought out without great Labour and Attention of mind: And when we are at any diſtance from ſelf-evident Truths, the mind is not only perplexed with the Conſideration of a great many Circumſtances, but which is worſe, Forgetfulneſs or Miſtake in the leaſt of them, fruſtrates our whole Deſign, and rewards us with nothing but Error for our trouble.

Now he that is ſo liable to be impoſed upon, who riſes but by Inches, and enriches himſelf, by ſuch ſlow and inſenſible Degrees; 'tis a Sign that his Stock was either very ſmall, or that he is unskilfull in the management of his Buſineſs, and therefore he has no reaſon to be proud of what he has gotten: Beſides it's an humbling conſideration to reflect what pains we are obliged to take to muſter up our Forces, and to make that little reaſon we have ſerviceable. How faſt does Obſcurity, Flatneſs and Impertinency flow in upon our Meditations? 'Tis a difficult Task to talk to the purpoſe, and to put life and perſpicuity into our Diſcourſes; thoſe who are moſt ready and inventive have not their beſt Thoughts uppermoſt: No, they muſt think upon the Stretch, ranſack, and turn over their mind, and put their Imagination into a kind of Ferment, if they intend to produce any thing extraordinary: So that conſidering the Trouble and almoſt

Violence we are put upon, one would think that Senſe and Reaſon was not made for Mankind, and that we ſtrive againſt our Natures, when we pretend to it.

Philot. Well; What though our Minds were poor, and unfurniſhed at firſt, is it any diſparagement to us to have more Wit than we were born with? What though we can't ſtrike out a Science at a Heat, but are forced to poliſh our ſelves by degrees, and to work hard for what we have? The leſs we were aſſiſted by Nature, the greater commendation it is to our Induſtry, and our attainments are ſo much the more our own. And ſince we have thus fairly diſtinguiſhed our ſelves by Merit, why ſhould we ſeem unapprehenſive of our Performances? ſince we have paid ſo dear for the Improvements of our underſtanding, and our advantages are gained with ſo much Difficulty, what harm is it to make our beſt of them? Why ſhould we not oblige the negligent to Diſtance and Regard, and make thoſe who are younger or leſs knowing than our ſelves ſenſible of their Inferiority?

Philal. I agree with you as I have already hinted, that a Man may lawfully maintain his Character and juſt pretences againſt Rudeneſs and Ignorance, eſpecially when the publick Good is concerned in his Reputation. But when he acts a private part, and conver-

ſes

ſes with People of Senſe and Modeſty, he ſhould give them but very gentle remembrances of his Prerogative: his Opinion of his own worth ſhould but juſt dawn upon them, and at the moſt give them but an obſcure and remote notice, that he expected any ſingular Acknowledgment: He ſhould take the reſpect that is paid him rather as a Preſent than a Debt, and ſeem thankful for that which is his own: But to be ſtiff and formally reſerved as if the Company did not deſerve our Familiarity; to be haughty and contemptuous, and to make ſcanty and underproportioned returns of Civility: this is a downright Challenge of Homage, and plainly tells people, they muſt be very mannerly: 'Tis in effect to ſay, Gentlemen, I have more Learning, and have done the publick greater Service than you, and therefore I expect to be conſidered for it: you may poſſibly ſay that I have more preferment too, and am paid for my merit in mony, but that ſhall not ſerve your turn; for except you ſhew your ſelves very dutiful, I ſhall give you broad Signs of my diſſatisfaction, and never let you have the Honour of my converſe again. Now ſuch a Man if he went much abroad, would plague mankind more with his Company, than he could oblige them with his Writings, though they were never ſo conſiderable. Such People ſeem to

owe

owe their parts to their ill Temper: Their Induſtry is malicious, and they have taken pains not ſo much to oblige the World, as to get an Opportunity of trampling upon their Inferiours. Had they been good-natured, they would have been as dull and inſignificant as their Neighbours. But their imperious Carriage is juſt as reaſonable as it would have been for the old *Athletæ* to have drudged hard in Eating and Exerciſe, that they might employ their Bulk and Activity in beating every one who was weaker, and leſs skilful than themſelves.

Philot. By your diſcourſe you ſeem to miſtake the matter, and not to weigh things rightly. 'Tis not Superiority that theſe Gentlemen of Learning are ſo ſolicitous about; 'tis not perſonal Advantage which they chiefly intend by their Reſervedneſs: They have no doubt a more publick and generous Deſign; for you may obſerve they uſually bear hardeſt upon thoſe of their own Order and Profeſſion, which is nothing but a forced and politick ſtatelineſs for the promoting of Knowledg in others. The young Fry, whether you know it or not, muſt be held at a Diſtance, and kept under the Diſcipline of Contempt. If you give them any tolerable Quarter, you indulge them in their Idleneſs, and ruin them to all intents and purpoſes. For who would be at the trouble of

Learning,

Learning, when he finds his Ignorance is careſſed, and that he is eaſie and acceptable enough in the Company of the beſt Authors of the Town? But when you brow-beat them and maul them, you make them Men for ever; for *Vexatio dat intellectum*; though they have no natural Metal, yet if they are ſpurred and kicked they will mend their pace, if they have any feeling. Such rigorous uſage will make them ſtudy night and day to get out of this ignominious Condition, in hopes that it may come to their own turn to be proud one day. Take my word for it, there is no ſuch way to make a Scholar, as to keep him under while he is young, or unpreferred.

Philal. Notwithſtanding your Flouriſh I can't perſwade my ſelf that this Diſpenſation of Pride is ſo mighty uſeful as you pretend. I ſhould think ſuch an untoward management of any Accompliſhment ſhould rather diſcourage others from attempting ſuch dangerous circumſtances. If Senſe and Learning are ſuch unſociable imperious things, a good-natured Man ought to take eſpecial care not to improve too faſt. He ought to keep down the growth of his Reaſon, and curb his Intellectuals when he finds them ready to outſtrip his Neighbours. I aſſure you, if I was of your opinion, and thought my ſelf near the temptation to ſo much ill humour, I would never look on a Book again. *Philot.*

Philot. Come when you have ſaid all, there is no keeping up the Credit of Learning without that which you call a reſerved behaviour. For if thoſe who are eminent this way ſhould condeſcend to thoſe Familiarities which you ſeem to deſire, the honour of their Profeſſion would ſuffer much by it; if they ſhould converſe upon the Level, the veneration which their Inferiours have for them would quickly wear off: And if the vulgar obſerved there was no diſtinction kept up amongſt the Men of Letters; they would ſuſpect there was nothing extraordinary in any of them. Pray who are ſuppoſed to be the beſt Judges of Learning, thoſe who have it or others?

Philal. No doubt thoſe who have it.

Philot. Then if they ſeem to undervalue it themſelves, is not this the way to bring it into a general diſrepute? I tell you once again, if the privileges of Merit are not inſiſted upon all, muſt go to wrack. If a Man who has digeſted all the Fathers, and is ready to add himſelf to the Number, ſhews any tolerable countenance to one who has ſcarce rubbed through *Ignatius*, and lets a pure Engliſh Divine to go cheek by jole with him, the Commonwealth of Learning will grow almoſt as contemptible as that of the Pigmies, and be only fit to write Romances upon.

Philal.

Philal. I ſhall not enquire how far this lofty method may advance the Reputation of Learning, but I am pretty ſure it's no great addition to theirs who uſe it; for it only makes others more inquiſitive into their defects, and more inclinable to expoſe them. If they take them tardy they endeavour to humble them by way of Reprizal. Thoſe ſlips and miſmanagements are uſually ridiculed and aggravated, when ſuch Perſons are guilty of them; which would be overlooked or excuſed in others of a more modeſt and affable Converſation. If they happen to be found inconſiſtent with themſelves: If their vanity of appearing ſingular puts them upon advancing Paradoxes, and proving them as Paradoxically. If a preſumption upon their own ſtrength, and a deſire of greater triumph makes them venture too far into the enemies Quarters, and take up a Poſt which they can't maintain; they are uſually laught at for their folly and left to ſhift for themſelves; for Pride never has any friends, and all Men are glad of a juſt occaſion to leſſen his Reputation who makes ſuch an ill-natured uſe of it.

Philot. I conceive you harp a little too much upon one ſtring: do you think the inferiour Clergy for whom you are now pleading, are diſcouraged by none but thoſe of their own Profeſſion?

Philal.

Philal. No, I grant there is another ſort of People who uſe them with neglect enough: But then they are ſomewhat more to be excuſed. They have not ſuch fair opportunities to underſtand the juſt pretences of a liberal Education, and a Religious employment. They are apt to fall under unfortunate hands in their minority: The vanity of their Parents, and the Knavery of Flatterers often gives them a wrong notion of themſelves, and makes them admire nothing but Wealth and Greatneſs, and think no condition deſerves regard but that which reſembles their own. Beſides their neglect looks leſs unaccountably by reaſon of their Quality, and their Breeding makes their Pride ſit more decently upon them. They uſually contemn with a better Grace than others: for there is a great deal of Art and Myſtery in Pride to manage it handſomely: A man might almoſt as ſoon learn a Trade: and if we obſerve we ſhall find that thoſe who were not brought up to it, ſeldom prove their Crafts-maſter or practiſe with any ſort of addreſs. To which I may add, that ſuch Perſons are uſually willing to pay for their imperiouſneſs, ſo that a Man is not made a Fool for nothing. But when this lofty humour is clumſily and inartificially managed, when it's affected by thoſe of a ſelf-denying and mortified Profeſſion, and who get their Living by declaiming againſt it.

it. When it's taken up by Men of Senſe, who may well be expected to ſee through the folly of this Vice, and who generally have not thoſe pretences of a byaſſed Education to miſguide them: eſpecially when they play it upon Perſons of their own Order who were born and bred to as fair Expectations of Regard as themſelves, and are ſometimes their Inferiours in nothing ſo much as in Succeſs; this is ſuch a ſingular Practice that I had rather leave it undeſcribed than be forced to give it its proper Character.

Philot. I believe you will be willing to abate, if not to retract your cenſure when you conſider that theſe Gentlemen of the Gown, whom you think too much depreſſed, are many of them Curates; and is it not very reaſonable there ſhould be a diſtance obſerved between Maſters and Servants? If you confound theſe two Relations by laviſh and indiſcreet Familiarities, you deſtroy the reſpect, and by degrees the very notion of Superiority. If there is not a due Homage paid in Converſation, thoſe who are in a ſtate of ſubjection will neither know their Condition nor their Duty: They will be apt to forget they hold by a ſervile Tenure, and think themſelves enfranchiſed from all manner of Suit and Service. Beſides, if the Parſon ſhould uſe his Curate with that freedom which you inſinuate, as if there was neither dependence

nor

nor obligation between them; this might be of very ill example to the Pariſh, and make all other ſervants challenge the ſame liberty, and grow pert upon their Maſters: And when this Sawcineſs became univerſal, as it's likely it might do in a ſhort time, what leſs Miſchief could be expected from it, than an old *Scythian* Rebellion?

Philal. I confeſs, I was not aware the being of Government depended ſo much upon the diſtinction between Rector and Curate, and that if the modern way of Diſtance and Subordination was not kept up, we muſt preſently return to *Hobs*'s ſtate of Nature. If a Curate be ſuch a dangerous thing, that a little civil Uſage to him is ready to make the World fall about our Ears, I wonder why ſo many of them are ſuffered. Now without raiſing the *poſſe Comitatus*, if the Pluraliſts would but do their beſt to ſuppreſs them, their Number might quickly be ſo retrenched, that they would not be in the leaſt formidable. But you ſeem to argue all this while upon a wrong Principle, you take it for granted, that Curates are Servants; now if this proves a miſtake, you will own they may be treated with a little more freedom, without any danger to Authority.

Philot. Who doubts of their being Servants?

Philal.

Philal. I do, and for very good reaſons.

Philot. See how a Man may be miſtaken! I thought the *Engliſh* of Curate had been an Eccleſiaſtical Hireling.

Philal. No ſuch matter, the proper import of the Word ſignifies one who has the Cure of Souls; therefore in *France* all Parochial Prieſts are called Curates, as they are likewiſe in our Rubrick and Common-Prayer.

Philot. I find then there lies no Servitude in the Name, ſo that it muſt be either the Deputation, or Salary which they receive from the Inſtituted Prieſt, which ſinks them into this condition.

Philal. That there is no Servitude in either of theſe, I am ready to make good. 1. Not in the Office; and here I muſt crave leave to ask you a few Queſtions.

Philot. Take your own method.

Philal. What in your apprehenſion is a Curate's Employment?

Philot. To ſerve God in the publick Offices of Religion, and to take care of the Pariſh.

Philal. Then he is not entertained to ſerve the Rector.

Philot. Go on.

Philal. In the next place I deſire to know whether Authority is not eſſential to a Maſter?

Philot. Who queſtions it?

Philal. Has the Curate his Authority to Preach, and Adminiſter the Sacraments from the Rector?

Philot. No, from the Biſhop.

Philal. May not a Maſter turn away his Servants when he pleaſes?

Philot. I think ſo.

Philal. But the Rector has no power to remove the Curate after he is Licenſed and Fixed by the Biſhop. To ſum up the Evidence therefore; if the Curate was not entertained to wait upon the Rector, nor has his Authority from him, nor can be removed from his Employment, I think it is pretty plain he is none of his Servant.

Philot. Well, but does not the Parſon make choice of him, and pay him?

Philal. Don't a Corporation chooſe a Mayor?

Philot. What then?

Philal. Pray whoſe Servant is he after his Election?

Philot. None but the Kings that I know of: but you have not anſwered the latter part of my objection about his being paid by the Rector.

Philal. If you had not called for my anſwer, I had waved it for your ſake, becauſe I think your objection borders ſomewhat upon Treaſon.

Philot. How ſo?

Philal.

Philal. Why, is it not of kin to Treaſon to ſay the Subjects are Maſters over the Supreme Authority?

Philot. If Nonſenſe will not excuſe a Man, I think it is.

Philal. But your Argument proves the King a Servant to the People.

Philot. How?

Philal. Becauſe they pay him Taxes, and that among other reaſons, by way of acknowledgment of the benefits of his Government, and that they may ſhew themſelves willing, if it was in their power, to requite him for his care of the State.

Philot. Pray why ſo much concerned to prove Curates no Servants?

Philal. Becauſe I am willing to reſcue them from that contempt, which they will certainly fall into, as long as they paſs under this notion: which conſidering the number of perſons Officiating, this way, muſt be very prejudicial to Religion. Beſides it makes ſome perſons, who are fit to do the Church ſervice, ſuſpend themſelves, and ſhew their Prieſthood only by their Habit, rather than ſerve God under ſuch uncreditable circumſtances: and for the ſame reaſon others are tempted to grow too fond of a Preſentation, and chooſe rather to court it by Flattery, or other indirect practices, than be condemned to the ſervile condition of a Curate. For let me tell you, it is

no ordinary piece of Self-Denial, for a Man of a generous Education, who has been trained up all along to Freedom and good Uſage, to be degraded in his Manhood, when the mind is moſt in love with Liberty, and to enter upon Buſineſs with marks of diſadvantage, when he ſtands moſt in need of Reputation. To my thinking this is a very diſcouraging and prepoſterous way of Educating the Clergy. If a Man muſt go to ſervice, he had better begin with it as they do in Trades, and not be Maſter at firſt, and then be forced to turn Apprentice, or Journyman afterwards. Of ſuch ill conſequence it is to miſcal things, and as *Plato* obſerves, that an alteration of the Notes in Muſick is apt to produce an Innovation in the Laws and Cuſtoms of a Country: ſo by changing the names of Offices for others of leſs Repute, we change the Uſes and Deſigns of them, and make them leſs ſatisfactory to thoſe engaged, and leſs ſerviceable to the Publick than they would have been, if the Character of their Inſtitution had been kept up.

Philot. Granting at preſent what you ſay to be true, yet a Curate ſeems to lie under another diſadvantage, which makes him conſidered with Abatement.

Philal. What is that?

Philot. Why, People are apt to fancy that it is the want either of Parts or Conduct, which keeps him without a Patron.

Philal.

Philal. If People think ſo, I am ſorry their Senſe and Charity is no greater; for if they examined things fairly, they would find that the being a Curate is no Argument of a Mans inſignificancy, nor any juſt blemiſh to his Reputation. For it is often the integrity and generous temper of his mind which hinders him from a better Proviſion; it is becauſe he will not flatter the Pride of ſome, nor keep pace with the Bigottry of others: becauſe he will neither court Greatneſs nor Faction, nor make himſelf popular to the diſadvantage of his Audience. Becauſe he cannot digeſt a Simoniacal Contract, nor charge through Perjury with the courage of an Evidence. In ſhort, it is his plain and impartial dealing with the People, his reſolution to preſerve the Decency of his Character, and the Innocence of his Conſcience which bars his promotion: ſo that if he was mean enough to complain, he might have the ſatisfaction to apply this Sentence of *Tully* to himſelf, *Non nos vitia ſed virtutes afflixerunt.*

Philot. What a broad *Innuendo* is here upon the beneficed Clergy?

Philal. I am glad you have given me an opportunity of explaining my ſelf. My meaning is not that thoſe who are poſſeſſed of Livings have gained them, by ſuch indirect Courſes: God forbid! I only ſay, that all Men are not ſo lucky as to have the offer of fair

Conditions, and thoſe who have not, muſt be Curates if they will be honeſt; or elſe lay by the uſe of their Prieſthood, which I am afraid is not very accountable.

Philot. I confeſs you have brought your ſelf off well enough: But now I think on't you muſt try to maintain the liberty of your Curate a little more convincingly. For ſome ſay there lies Preſcription and immemorial Cuſtom againſt it, and then you know he is a Servant by Common Law.

Philal. Not at all: For as we are lately told by a great Lawyer, Preſcription is good for nothing where there are any Records to the contrary.

Philot. What Records can you produce?

Philal. Why, to mention no more, the 18*th* of the Apoſtles Canons, and the 80*th* of the Council of *Eliberis*, are, I think, conſiderable Evidence; the firſt of which forbids the ordaining of thoſe who had married a Servant, and the other excludes manumized Perſons, while their Patrons were living, from the Prieſthood.

Philot. Say you ſo? Then I fancy thoſe who drew up Queen *Elizabeths* Injunctions knew nothing of this piece of Antiquity you mention.

Philal. Your Reaſon?

Philot. Becauſe by thoſe Injunctions a Clergy-man could not lawfully marry till he had gone

gone and made his complaint againſt Celibacy, before two Juſtices of the Peace, and gained their conſent, and the *good will of the Maſter, or Miſtriſs where the Damſel ſerved.*

Philal. And then I ſuppoſe if he could not prevail by his Rhetorick they gave him a Warrant to diſtrein.

Philot. Or poſſibly if he courted in *forma pauperis* they aſſigned him a Wife *gratis* out of an Hoſpital.

Philal. Upon my word this Order, take it which way you will, has a ſingular aſpect, and looks as if it intended to put the Clergy in mind, that they ought not to aſpire above an *Abigail.* Certainly Diſcretion and Merit ran very low in the Church at that time, or elſe, ſome People were willing to make the Nation believe ſo. But to return to the Canons, the deſign of which was to ſecure the Reputation of the Clergy; but according to the modern opinion, this proviſion ſignifies nothing; for if a man muſt go to Service after he is in Orders, had he not as good do it before? In your ſence he often only changes his Lay for an Eccleſiaſtical Maſter, which ſometimes might be ſo far from an advantage that it would make the Servitude the more uneaſie, by being ſubjected to one no more than equal to himſelf.

Philot. I grant you in the Primitive Times the advantage of Prieſthood was equally ſha-

red among all the Order, and none of that Character had any Superiority over another. For then the Revenues of the Church consisted only in the voluntary Offerings of the People, which were all deposited with the Bishop, who assigned every one his respective portion; so that no Priest had any dependence upon another for his maintenance; but now the case is otherwise, and a man ought to be subject to him that supports him.

Philal. It's somewhat hard, that the bare alteration of the Church Revenues should make so wide a difference between those who were equal before; that a man must lose his freedom only for want of a Presentation, and be made a Servant because he does not take Tithes, though he has as much spiritual Authority as if he did. But I perceive you think there is no consideration equivalent to a little money, and that he who receives it must be no longer at his own disposal, though he makes never so valuable a return. Since therefore you insist so much upon maintenance, what if it appears that the Curate maintains the Parson?

Philot. That would be strange indeed.

Philal. To what end were the Church Revenues intended?

Philot. To keep up the worship of God.

Philal. Which way?

Philot.

Philot. By ſettling a competent maintenance upon the Miniſters of Religion, that they may be in the better capacity to diſcharge their Office, and not be obliged to loſe their time, and leſſen their Character, by engaging in Labourious or Mechanical Employments.

Philal. By your arguing there ſhould be ſomething for them to do.

Philot. Yes, they are to take care of that Precinct to which their Endowment is annex'd.

Philal. I hope you don't mean not to come at it.

Philot. I mean they are to take care of the performance of the duties of their Office.

Philal. Then ought not he to have the Revenues who performs theſe Duties?

Philot. I am not willing to grant that.

Philal. Have a care of denying the concluſion; you grant the Revenues of the Church were deſigned for the ſupport of the Clergy.

Philot. Yes.

Philal. Of what Clergy? Thoſe who live many miles diſtant from the Premiſes?

Philot. No, I'm afraid they were intended for thoſe who live upon the place, otherwiſe methinks Endowments are a very ſlender Proviſion for the benefit of the Pariſh.

Philal. Then if the Curate does all the work, ought he not to have the reward for his

his pains? In ſhort, either he is qualified to undertake the Pariſh or not; if not, with what ſincerity can he be employed? If he is qualified, why is he barred the profit when he only performs the Conditions upon which they were ſettled, when none but himſelf anſwers the deſign they were intended for? To ſpeak properly, the Rector ſeems to live out of the labours of another, he is maintained by the perquiſites of the Curates Office; and therefore is in effect but a kind of Penſioner to him.

Philot. I ſee you are an everlaſting Leveller, you won't allow any encouragement to extraordinary Induſtry and Merit.

Philal. You miſtake me. I would have the beſt men have the beſt Livings, but then before we go to doubling of Preferments, poſſibly it were not amiſs to examine whether the number of Benefices exceeds the Perſons who are capable of them. Let us firſt examine whether they will hold out one apiece, and when every man has one, then the ſupernumerary Livings may be divided amongſt thoſe who are moſt deſerving.

Philot. In good time, when it's likely there there will be none left! Now do you imagine the Church can be defended againſt her Adverſaries by the ſtrength of a ſingle Parſonage? But it may be you will ſay all our Plurality-men are not Writers.

Philal.

Philal. No, nor Readers neither. Beſides, we may obſerve that Hereſie and Schiſm were very ſucceſsfully combated before Unions, Diſpenſations, and Conſolidations were heard of. If you conſult Father *Paul*'s Hiſtory of the Council of *Trent*, (p. 216.) he will inform you that Non-reſidence and Pluralities are things of no very primitive eſtabliſhment. I confeſs ſome of the Lay-managers of our Reformation have not been over-kind to the Church, ſo that Affairs are not in ſo good a poſture as they might have been: But God be thanked there is ſtill ſome proviſion left for the Ornament and Defence of Religion.

Philot. What Proviſion do you mean?

Philal. Why, to ſpeak to your Caſe, there are Dignities, to which thoſe Gentlemen who are prepared to engage in the Controverſie have a good right: And with ſubmiſſion to better Judgments, I think it would not be amiſs if all dignified Perſons held their Preferments by a new Tenure.

Philot. What Tenure?

Philal. By Knights Service; purſuant to which they ſhould be obliged to draw their Pens in the Cauſe, when ever their Superiours required them: to appear in the Field upon an Invaſion with their *Quota*, and in ſhort, to maintain any Poſt that ſhall be aſſigned.

Philot.

Philot. What if a man has not a mind to quarrel, muſt he be turn'd out of his Dignity for being of a peaceable Diſpoſition?

Philal. Thoſe peaceable men you ſpeak of, are none of the moſt uſeful in a time of War, and therefore a ſmaller Gratification ſhould content them.

Philot. What if they are diſabled by age?

Philal. Then they ſhould be continued for their paſt Services.

Philot. Truly this is a good probable Expedient to keep the Church Militia in Diſcipline, and might for ought I know, very much improve the *noble Science of Controverſie.* But to return to the old Argument, if you intend to bring me over to your opinion of the Curate, you muſt clear the buſineſs of his Salary a little better, for I am afraid where he has his money he ought to own he has his Maſter too.

Philal. I confeſs there would be a great deal in what you ſay, if the Rector had the right of Coinage. If the Money had his Image, and Superſcription upon it, the Curate's taking it for currant, would conclude him under his Juriſdiction: but that the bare receiving a ſum ſhould ſink a Man into a ſervile ſtate, is paſt my comprehenſion. For conſidering that Mony is a thing of ſuch quality, and ſovereign ſway in the World, one would imagine it ſhould bring Power and

and Reputation along with it, and rather enlarge than abridge a Man's Liberty by receiving it. And to mention nothing farther, the nature of the Contract between the Rector and Curate, is ſufficient to give you ſatisfaction; for there, as has been obſerved, the Curate undertakes no other Employment but the Inſtruction and Government of the Pariſh. There is no attendance upon the Parſon, no running upon his Errands, nor ſubjection to his Humour indented for.

Philot. Methinks it is a little hard a Curate muſt not be called a Servant, as well as a Cook, or a Footman, ſince he has Wages as much as the other.

Philal. Poſſibly not always ſo much neither; but waving that, if you had remembred what I urged to you before, this Objection would have been no difficulty.

Philot. What was that?

Philal. Why, that the Curate is to wait upon none but God Almighty, that the manage of his Employment is not preſcribed by the Rector, but by the Rubrick and Cōnſtitutions of the Church, and that he is not removeable at pleaſure. I ſuppoſe by this time you apprehend there is a difference between him and a Footman, or a Steward either.

Philot. Well! Notwithſtanding your ſubtlety, this notion of Wages ſticks in my Stomach ſtill.

Philal.

Philal. I wonder the glitter of a little Mony ſhould dazle your Eyes at that rate, that you cannot ſee ſo plain a diſtinction. You don't ſeem to underſtand Commerce, if you think that ſomething of Authority and Dominion is always given in exchange for Mony. Now I am of *Diogenes* his mind, and believe it poſſible for one to buy a Maſter, as well as a Servant.

Philot. As how?

Philal. Why, for the purpoſe, if a perſon of twenty one puts himſelf Apprentice to another, you know this is ſeldom done without charge: now what does a Man do in this caſe but purchaſe his ſubjection, and hire himſelf a drubbing upon occaſion? To give one inſtance more. When a Woman of Fortune marries a Man with nothing, does ſhe not give him Meat, Drink, and Wages to govern her? And to end this diſpute, you know Phyſicians, and Lawyers, and Judges, have Fees or Wages, either given, or aſſigned them by Law, without being thought Servants to thoſe they are concerned with. Now, what reaſon is there a Curate ſhould have worſe luck with his Mony than other People?

Philot. To deal plainly, I ſuppoſe it is becauſe he does not get enough of it. If his Fees were as conſiderable as any of thoſe Gentlemen you ſpeak of, I queſtion not but his Office would be much more reputable.

Philal.

Philal. Well gueſſed, and therefore what Character do they deſerve who confine him to this ſcandalous Pittance. I believe you can ſcarcely name any ſort of Injuſtice which has a more malignant influence upon Religion than this oppreſion of Curates.

Philot. Why ſo Tragical?

Philal. Becauſe their Poverty expoſes them to Contempt, which renders their Inſtructions inſignificant, and which is worſe, makes them leſs conſiderable in themſelves, as well as in the opinion of others.

Philot. I hope Poverty is no crime.

Philal. No, but it's a ſcurvy temptation, eſpecially to thoſe who have lived freely, and been bred to better Expectations. For when a man finds his hopes diſappointed, himſelf unſupported, and topp'd upon by Perſons of meaner Pretences and Employments; this is apt to pall his Spirits, and check the courage of his thoughts, ſo that his Compoſitions and Fortune will ſeem to be much of a piece.

Philot. I thought ſtrait circumſtances had been none of the worſt promoters of Learning, according to the old ſaying, *Ingenii largitor Venter.*

Philal. I grant there is ſome truth in your obſervation, and that it is Want which often reconciles men to Labour and Letters; but this is at their firſt ſetting out, when though they

they have not gained their point, yet they are full of hopes, which pricks them on, and puts them upon their utmoſt. but after they are once qualified for ſucceſs, and find their induſtry diſcouraged, this makes them ſink in the ſocket, and fret away their ſtrength and Spirits; ſo that either out of impotence, or diſguſt, or diſpair, they give over the fruitleſs purſuit, and ſeldom make any generous attempt ever after. 'Tis true, there are ſome hardy ſouls that won't be beaten off by ill uſage, but theſe are very rarely to be met with.

Philot. Then you think there would be a ſtrange improvement in the unbeneficed Clergy, if they had a better Salary.

Philal. Yes; I think they would have more Books, and more Learning, and more Credit. They would not be ſo eaſily obliged to improper Compliances, nor ſo liable to ſeveral other miſcarriages in their Conduct.

Philot. By your diſcourſe the ſlender proviſion which is made for them, ſhould be very Criminal.

Philal. Doubtleſs ſo it is. For pray conſider.

Philot. Pray be as brief as you can.

Philal. I ſay then, for a Clergy-man to enrich himſelf by the labour and neceſſities of one of his own Order, and make his Figure out of the Church without performing the Ser-

vices

vices required, is a direct tranſlating the holy Revenues to a Foreign and ſecular uſe, and conſequently beſides other aggravations is no better than ſacrilege, which is a very uncanonical Sin, and unleſs we are very much in the dark will be accounted for afterwards. In ſhort this Practice has been the main ground of the Contempt of the Clergy, making one part of them grow cheap by their Poverty, and the other by their Covetouſneſs.

Philot. Pray what allowance would you oblige the Rector to, if you had the Regulation of that Affair?

Philal. To ſpeak within Compaſs, in my Opinion the Curate ought to have half the profits, let the value of them be never ſo conſiderable; for if the Parſon has the other moiety for doing nothing, I think he has no reaſon to complain. But if the Living be ſmall, then he that ſupplies it ſhould have two thirds aſſigned him, becauſe he cannot be decently ſupported under that proportion.

Philot. Well, I am not diſpoſed to examin that matter any farther. But I beſeech you what is all this to the buſineſs of Pride? I think your Zeal for the Curates has tranſported you a little out of your Subject.

Philal. No ſuch matter; for it is generally nothing but Ambition which makes Men Covetous and Mean: beſides, if it is a Digreſſion it is a very ſeaſonable one. However

I am willing to take my leave of this part of the Argument, therefore if you pleaſe we will call a new Cauſe.

Philot. I think it is beſt to adjourn at preſent, and when we meet again I will venture the other Bruſh with you.

Philal. Till then Farewel.

A SECOND CONFERENCE BETWEEN *Philotimus* and *Philalethes.*

Philal. WELL met! I am glad the opportunity you mentioned is ſo quickly returned.

Philot. So am I, and therefore if you pleaſe without any further Ceremony, let us purſue the Argument we were laſt upon.

Philal. With all my Heart, and ſince (as has been ſhewed) Learning and Conceit, make ſo odd a Figure; let us proceed to examine the pretences of Nobility, for I am afraid the Vulgar Notion of it is ſcrewed ſomewhat too high, and that it has not Ballaſt enough to carry all the Sail which is commonly made out.

Philot. I muſt tell you, you are upon a touchy Point, and therefore I hope you will treat ſo nice a ſubject as this is with proportionable caution.

Philal. I am ſenſible of what you ſay, and ſhall manage my enquiry with all the fairneſs, and decency, the free diſcuſſion of the Queſtion will allow. To begin, you know all Men were equally Noble, or if you will, equally Plebeian at firſt: now I would gladly underſtand how they came to be ſo much diſtinguiſhed afterwards, for there are different reaſons aſſigned.

Philot. I ſuppoſe the diſtinctions you mention, were founded upon extraordinary performances, and won at the expence of Induſtry and Merit. For how can you imagine any perſons ſhould emerge out of the common Maſs of Mankind, unleſs by the advantages of Capacity, Labour, and Reſolution? Their mounting, argues that Fire was the ruling Element in their Compoſition; and that they were of a more vigorous and enterprizing Spirit than their Neighbours.

Philal. I am willing to ſuppoſe with you, that they made a generous uſe of theſe advantages, and employed them for the benefit of Mankind: being as remarkable for their Juſtice, Fidelity, and good Humour, as for their Conduct and Courage; and therefore I am not willing to believe the account which ſome pretend to give concerning the Original of Nobility.

Philot. What is that?

Philal.

Philal. They will tell you that it has been often founded upon Rapine and Injuſtice. It ſeems they have obſerved out of *Thucidides*, that in antient times it was counted an Heroick Atcheivement to Plunder luſtily, and he was a Man of the beſt Quality, who was able to ſteal moſt Cattle. Theſe *Nimrods* (ſay they) grew great by the ſtrength of their Limbs and their Vices, engraved their Murthers upon their Shields, and Hectored all the little and peaceable People into Peaſantry.

Philot. This looks ſo like a Chimerical and ill natur'd Opinion, that I ſhall not do it the honor of a Confutation.

Philal. I have no exceptions to your Reſentment, but to go on, for the more diſtinct conſideration of the Argument, we will divide Nobility into two kinds, Hereditary, or Acquired. The firſt is tranſmitted to us from our Anceſtors, the other is immediately conferred by the favour of the Prince.

Philot. Proceed upon the ſeveral parts of your Diviſion.

Philal. 1. Then, Hereditary Nobility ſeems no juſt ground for a high Opinion, becauſe it is borrowed. Thoſe great Actions which we had no ſhare in, cannot properly be any part of our Commendation, eſpecially if we want abilities to imitate them. 'Tis true, they ought to be taken notice of by others for the encouragement of Vertue, and the ornament

of Society. But then he that depends wholly upon the worth of others, ought to consider that he has but the honor of an Image, and is worshiped not for his own sake, but upon the account of what he represents. To be plain, it is a sign a Man is very poor when he has nothing of his own to appear in; but is forced to patch up his Figure with the Relicks of the Dead, and rifle Tomb-Stones and Monuments for Reputation.

Philot. Notwithstanding your rallying, I cannot conceive what crime it is to possess the Inheritance of our Forefathers. Now Honor is part of their Estate, which was raised on purpose that we might be the better for it. And since their Children were the occasion of their merit, and pushed them on to generous undertakings, ought they not to share in the glory of the Success?

Philal. Yes. But it should be managed with great modesty, because though an honourable Title may be conveyed to Posterity, yet the ennobling Qualities which are the Soul of Greatness, are a sort of incommunicable perfections, and cannot be transferred. Indeed if a Man could bequeath his Virtues by Will, and settle his Sense, and Learning, and Resolution, upon his Children, as certainly as he can his Lands, a brave Ancestor would be a mighty privilege.

Philot.

Philot. I hope thoſe fine Qualities are not ſo incommunicable as you ſuppoſe, for methinks there is a *Je ne ſcay quoi*, in perſons well born: there is a peculiar Nobleneſs of Temper in them, their Converſation is inimitably graceful, and a Man may diſtinguiſh their Quality by the Air of their Faces.

Philal. I wiſh that Spirit of Honor and Bravery you mention, was inſeparable to their Quality; but it is too plain that great Minds, and great Fortunes don't always go together; however I grant there is ſome Truth in your obſervation, but am afraid the diſtinction does not always ſpring from the cauſe you aſſign. For by the gracefulneſs of Converſation, I ſuppoſe you mean a decent Aſſurance, and an Addreſs in the Modes, and Geſtures of Salutation. Now theſe are pretty accompliſhments I confeſs, and recommend a Man to Company with ſome advantage; but then they are eaſily gained by Cuſtom and Education, and therefore we need not fetch them *ex Traduce*. And moreover, theſe little Formalities are often magnified beyond all Senſe and Reaſon, and ſome People are ſo Fantaſtically fond of them, as if they were the topper perfections of Human Nature; and that it were in reality a more valuable and gentile quality to Dreſs well, and come handſomely into a Room, than to take a Town, or to be fit to diſcharge the Office of a Privy Coun-

ſellor. Now with ſubmiſſion to theſe Ceremonious Gentlemen, I am not of their mind in this matter, but think it much better for a Mans Parts to lie in his Head, than in his Heels.

Philot. I think ſo too, but you have not anſwered the whole.

Philal. True! Your Air was omitted: now if this was a conſtant privilege of Birth, which you know it is not, yet in this deceitful Age of ours, there is no Arguing from an Outſide. Beſides, I doubt this Advantage is ſometimes the effect of a ſlothful and Effeminate Life. When Men will attempt nothing either in the Field, or in their Cloſets: when they will neither trouble themſelves with Thinking, nor endure to be expoſed to the Weather: This Niceneſs, though it renders them inſignificant to the great purpoſes of Life, yet it Poliſhes their Complexion, and makes their Spirits ſeem more moving and tranſparent. Sometime this Sprightlineſs and Grandeur of Face, is Painted by Flattery: for when Men are once made to believe they are very Conſiderable, they are preſently for trying to write the Inſcriptions of their Quality upon their Forehead. Now Conceit when it is Corrected with a mixture of Gravity, is an admirable *Waſh*, and will make one look as Wiſe, and as Great as you would wiſh.

Philot.

Philot. This Grandeur of Face, as you call it, may poſſibly be explained upon kinder Principles; for I am apt to believe that a quick Senſe of Honour, a Conſciouſneſs of Worth, an Elevation of Thought, will ſometimes break out into a Luſtre, and make the great Soul ſparkle in a Man's Eyes.

Philal. I cannot deny what you ſay, and therefore the beſt Conſtruction ought to be made, where the known Character of the perſon does not diſallow it.

Philot, I ſee you can be fair when you liſt, therefore I ſhall venture to go on with you to another Advantage of Nobility, *viz.* Antiquity. Now to begin in your own way, Don't you think it is a great addition to ones Birth to ſtand at the bottom of long Parchment Pedigree, and be ſome yards removed from the firſt Eſcocheon? Is not that Family ſubſtantially Built which can ſtand the ſhock of Time, and hold out againſt all varieties of Accidents? How generous muſt that Blood be, which has been ſo long Refining, and run through the Channels of Honor for ſo many Ages, where it is ſometimes as hard to come to the Plebeian Fountain: as to find out the Head of *Nilus?*

Philal. Not ſo hard neither, For if you go but one Inch farther than the Gentleman at the Topyou ſpoke of, it is ten to one but you take old Goodman, *&c.* by the Leathern Breeches.

Breeches. And as for the Antiquity of a Family, though it looks prettily at first ſight, yet I fear it will abate upon examination.

Philot. Pray try your ſkill upon it, for I am not of your mind.

Philal. Then to deal plainly with you, I conceive the Antiquity you talk of, is commonly nothing but antient Wealth, and therefore the chief commendation of this Privilege conſiſts in the long continued Frugality of the Family, who after they were once poſſeſſed of an Eſtate, had the Diſcretion to keep it.

Philot. Is it nothing then for a Man's Anceſtors to have lived in Reputation, and to have had Intereſt and Command in their Country for ſo many Generations?

Philal. I ſuppoſe the *Engliſh* of all this is no more than that they have lived in good Houſes, Eat and Drank better, and born higher Offices than thoſe who have wanted a Fortune. Now Mony, and a moderate ſhare of Senſe, will furniſh any Man with all theſe Advantages. And as to the holding out againſt ſo many Accidents, and Alterations of State, I am afraid it ſometimes proceeds from ſhifting and indifferent Principles, and from a ſervile compliance with whatever is Uppermoſt. So that what my Lord *Bacon* mentions in reference to Notions and Inventions, may be ſometimes applicable to Families; where he tells us, that Time is like a River,

in

in which Metals and ſolid Subſtances are ſunk, while Chaff and Straws ſwim upon the Surface.

Secondly, You are to conſider that an antient Gentility does not neceſſarily convey to us any advantage either of Body or Mind: and to ſpeak like Philoſophers, theſe are the only two things in which we are capable of any real improvement. I confeſs, if every Generation grew Wiſer, Stronger, Handſomer, or longer Lived than the other: if the Breed of a Man's Family was thus improved, the farther it was continued; then indeed the quality of an Eſcocheon would be exactly contrary to that of Cloaths, and the one would always grow better, as the other does worſe, by wearing. From whence it would follow, that if the ſeven Sleepers had been made Gentlemen immediately before they entred their Cave, and had held on their Nap from ſeventy, to ſeven hundred years, they had moſt undeniably ſlept themſelves into a conſiderable degree of Quality.

Philot. You may talk as ſubtilly as you pleaſe, but you muſt not think to baffle eſtabliſhed and unconteſted Opinions, with a few Logical quirks.

Philal. Pray don't grow warm, and I will endeavour to ſatisfie you, and in order to it, I obſerve in the third place, That an antient Gentility, makes a Man Superior only to thoſe

of

of the ſame Quality, (*viz.* an Eſquire, to an Eſquire, and ſo in the reſt) and that in nothing but in point of Precedency. The reaſon, I ſuppoſe, why thoſe which are placed in any degree of Honor, precede others who are afterwards raiſed to the ſame Height, is for the encouragement of Induſtry. To make Men forward to exert their earlieſt Endeavours to deſerve well of the State; for this reaſon there is a diſtinction made between Merit, otherwiſe equal, only upon the account of the Priority of Time.

Philot. Is this all you can afford?

Philal. Look you! We that pretend to be ſubject to a Conſtitution, muſt not Carve out our own Quality, for at this rate a Cobler may make himſelf a Lord.

Philot. And what then?

Philal. Why, then I ſay, it is Vanity for any Man to have a better Opinion of his Family than the Law allows: my Reaſon is, becauſe the Law is the meaſure of Honor, as well as of all other Civil Rights. Beſides, I muſt tell you that it is both reaſonable, and the Intereſt of the State that Merit ſhould be conſidered, of what date ſoever it is. A worthy Action ought to be as much rewarded now, as one of the ſame kind was a thouſand years ſince. The proſpect of Honor, to a generous Mind, is the chief incitement to all great Undertakings. This conſideration

deration Poliſhes Arts and Sciences, makes Men Induſtrious in improving their Underſtandings, and Reſolute in expoſing their Perſons, for the Publick Service. If therefore we dote upon Antiquity ſo far, as to undervalue the Merit of the preſent Age, the Government muſt neceſſarily ſuffer by it: for ſuch a Partiality will ſlacken the Nerves of Induſtry, and occaſion a negligence both in thoſe who have an antient Title to Honor, and in thoſe who have not. The firſt will grow ſluggiſh, becauſe they have a ſufficient ſhare of Reputation already; and therefore need not run any hazards about getting more. The latter will abate in their forwardneſs to oblige their Country, becauſe they know their Service, though never ſo great, will be contemned, and for that very Reaſon which ought to make them the more valued, that is, becauſe their Conſiderableneſs came from themſelves. Moreover, If the Inheritors of antient Honor, have not by Perſonal Additions improved that Stock which was granted to their Anceſtors; there is no reaſon it ſhould be rated above the ſame Degree (Precedency excepted) which is given now. For to affirm that a Family raiſed to Nobility by this King, is not as good as one raiſed by the Conqueror, is a reflection upon his preſent Majeſty: it ſuppoſes his Judgment, or his Authority, leſs conſiderable than that of

his

his Predeceſſours; and that the Fountain of Honour is almoſt dry'd up, and runs more muddy than in former Ages.

Philot, How plauſibly ſoever you may make your opinion look, I'm ſure it has the diſadvantage of being Singular. For you know a plain Gentleman of an ancient Family is accounted a Perſon of better Quality than a new made Knight, though the reaſon of his dubbing was never ſo Meritorious. Honour like *China* Diſhes muſt lie ſome Ages under Ground before it comes to any Perfection. And to carry on your own Figure, the greater diſtance from the ſpring always makes the Stream the more conſiderable.

Philal. This it is to be wiſer than the Laws! And ſince you are for Illuſtrations I reply, that to ſuppoſe an ancient Title (though leſſer in degree) is preferable to a greater of late Creation, is as if one ſhould affirm that an old ſhilling is better than a new half-Crown, though the Alloy and Impreſſion are the ſame in both. Nay from your Argument a man may conclude that a coarſer metal only by being digg'd and refin'd in the Dayes of our Great Grandfathers, (though perhaps it has contracted ſome ruſt by lying) is more valuable than the ſame weight in Gold but lately ſeparated from the Oare. And that an ancient Eſtate is really better than one newly purchaſed, though the Lands

of

of the latter are richer, and the Survey larger than the other. Now if a man ſhould prove ſo fanciful as to demand a greater Rent for his Farm becauſe it has been in the Poſſeſſion of his Family for ſome hundred of years, I believe the want of Tenants would ſoon convince him of his Errour. From whence it's evident that in taking an Eſtimate of Nobility we are not ſo much to conſider its Antiquity, as the Merit of the firſt Grantee, and the diſtinction the Prince has put upon it; which like Figures or other marks upon Money, ſtamp the value, and tell the Subject for how much it is to paſs.

Philot. Pray by your favour are not Meddals, and Coyns valued more for their Antiquity than their Metal?

Philal. That Queſtion is to the point; and therefore I anſwer,

Firſt, That Coyns, *&c.* though they are valuable as rarities, yet they ſignifie little in Exchange and common uſe; And if a man has any debt to pay, or Commodities to buy, K. *Charles* his Image, and ſuperſcription will do him much more ſervice than Ce'ſar's.

Secondly, The Reaſon why theſe things are ſometimes ſo much valued, is not becauſe they are old but uſeful: They often rectifie Chronology, and explain Hiſtory, and retrieve us ſeveral material parts of Learning, which

which might otherwiſe have been irrecoverably loſt.

Thirdly, There is a diſparity in the caſe of ancient Coyns and Families; For in the firſt you have the ſame numerical peice, in the latter nothing but the Name or Relation, ſo that the change and ſucceſſion of Perſons ſeems to deſtroy the notion of Antiquity. To make the Inſtance parallel we muſt ſuppoſe a Gentleman as old as *Methuſalem*, and then I confeſs he would be a great Curioſity, and ought to be valued accordingly.

Philot. As I remember you were ſaying, the merit of the firſt Gentleman of the Houſe ought to be conſider'd.

Philal. Yes, I conceive that circumſtance very material, and that if upon enquiry it proves unintelligible, or unlucky, it's no ſmall abatement to the Family. For if he Advanced himſelf by a voluntary engaging in unjuſt Quarrels, he has no better pretence to Honour than what a reſolute and ſucceſsful Padder may Challenge. If he owes his Heraldry to a ſervile Flattery, and a dextrous Application to the vices of Princes, the marks of their Favour are rather infamous than Honourable to his Poſterity, becauſe he is ennobled for thoſe qualities, for which he ought to have been puniſhed.

Philot. What if the Gentility was purchaſed, I hope we may make the beſt of what we have paid for?

Philal.

Philal. By all means! But then this is a ſign that Worth and diſtinguiſhing Qualities were wanting, otherwiſe the Honour had been conferred Gratis. The ſame may be ſaid when *Arms* or Titles are given at the Inſtance or recommendation of a Favorite, for this is down-right begging for Quality, and looks more like an Alms than an Honour. Farther it's a leſſening to a mans Nobility, when the Reaſon and Grounds of it are unknown, for if his Riſe had been derived from worthy and creditable Cauſes, he would in all likelyhood have been as certainly acquainted with them, as with his Arms; It being both eaſie and for the Reputation of the Family, that Records of this nature ſhould have been preſerv'd, and therefore the loſs of them ſeems rather to proceed from Deſign than Neglect. In ſhort, if the firſt Principles of Honour happen to be thus coarſe, or counterfeit, it's not in the power of time to mend them: A Pebble or *Briſtol* ſtone will not change their natures, and improve into Diamonds, though they are laid up a thouſand years together.

Philot. Hark you Mr. I doubt your Effects (if you have any) have lain but a little while in the Heralds Office.

Philal. Probably as long as your Worſhips: But I take it to be much more a Gentlemanly quality to diſcover ſuch unſociable

miſtakes than to abett them. If we are capable of underſtanding any thing, it muſt undoubtedly be more creditable to promote good humour and modeſty in Converſation, and give men right Apprehenſions of themſelves; than to flatter them into groundleſs Conceits, and make them believe they may be truly Great, and yet good for nothing. To maintain ſuch indefenſible and dangerous Principles of Honour, which not only impoſe upon our Underſtandings, but emaſculate our Spirits, and ſpoyl our Temper, and tend only to the nouriſhing of Idleneſs and Pride; is in my opinion no very Heroical undertaking.

Philot. Then I find we muſt come to the Merits of the Cauſe as you call them, and examine upon what foundation the Family ſtands.

Philal. I think that is the only way to know what we have to truſt to, and how far we may inſiſt upon the advantages of Birth.

Philot. What are the uſual ſteps to Honour?

Philal. I ſuppoſe one of theſe three, Learning, Commerce or Arms. The pretences of Learning have been examined already; To which I ſhall only add, that if a Perſon whoſe mind is enlarged, and beautified with all ſorts of uſeful Knowledge, is notwithſtanding

obliged

obliged to Modeſty, and Sobriety of thought, then certainly thoſe who claim under him, and are wiſe only by Proxy, ought not to grow too big upon their Relation to the Muſes. To Proceed, Commerce is another Expedient which often diſtinguiſhes a man from the vulgar. For Trading raiſes an Eſtate, and that procures Honour, ſo that in this Caſe Wealth is the main of the merit, and that which is chiefly inſiſted on by thoſe who inherit it. But here we ought to be very cautious and meek-ſpirited, till we are aſſured of the honeſty of our Anceſtours, for *Covetouſneſs* and *Circumvention* make no good Motto for a Coat. And yet your men of Trade are too often aſſiſted in their Fortunes by theſe Qualities.

Philot. I think you are too hard upon them, and believe they may come into their Eſtates by more accountable methods, *viz.* by their Induſtry, by Underſtanding how to make uſe of all fair advantages, and by the luck of a good Acquaintance.

Philal. I grant there is a great deal of Good Faith, Frankneſs and Generoſity to be found among Tradeſmen, and that ſuch Profeſſions are neceſſary to the convenience and ſplendor of Life, and being thus uſeful ought to be eſteemed Honourable. But their being uſed to value ſmall gains is apt (without care) to make them contract a narrow-

neſs of Spirit, and to ſtand too much to the point of Intereſt.

Philot. What is that which they call the Myſtery of Trade?

Philal. A great part of it conſiſts in the skill of over-reaching their Cuſtomers, which Science, I fear is not learned meerly for Speculation.

Philot. Poſſibly it may be for Caution, that they may not be impoſed on by others.

Philal. I am willing to think ſo, however theſe *Arcana Officinæ*, are counted ſuch Eſſentials, that except an Apprentice is fully inſtructed how to Adulterate, and Varniſh, and give you the Go-by upon occaſion, his Maſter may be charged with Neglect, and ſued for not teaching him his Art, and his Trade.

Philot. It ſeems then he cannot be an Honeſt Man, except he teaches his Servant to play the Knave.

Philal. Granting your Inference, yet you know a Man may underſtand his Weapon better than his Neighbour, and notwithſtanding be of a very peaceable inoffenſive Temper. However, when the Riſe of the Family is owing to ſuch an Original, a Man has a particular Reaſon not to flouriſh too much upon the glitter of his Fortune, for fear there ſhould be too much Alloy in it. For ſome People are forced to climb in a very mean and ſervile poſture. They muſt Flatter, Deceive, and

Pinch;

Pinch; uſe their Neighbours, and themſelves too, very unkindly, before they can gain their Point. So that if the Anceſtour had not been remarkably Little, his Poſterity had never been reputed Great.

Philot. But what needs all this Scruple? Why ſhould I enquire ſo anxiouſly how my Anceſtors came by their Eſtate? Let their Merit be as ſmall as you pleaſe, the Revenue will not ſink upon this Score. Now, if you conſidered the Sovereignty of Mony, how it commands Honor, and Beauty, and Power, how much of Ornament, and Defence, and Pleaſure there is in it; you would allow us to be a little Uppiſh upon the Matter: for when a Man has ſuch a Univerſal Inſtrument of Delight, and is Maſter of that, which is Maſter of every thing elſe, he ought viſibly to Congratulate his Happineſs, and pay himſelf a particular Reſpect.

Philal. If I could purchaſe a parcel of new Senſes, and ſome pretty undiſcovered Curioſities to pleaſe them with, I confeſs I ſhould be more deſirous of growing Rich than I am.

Philot. What though you cannot buy any new, you may pleaſe the old ones better, and make one Senſe go as far as two, with Poverty.

Philal. I am not altogether of your mind; beſides if my Underſtanding does not improve proportionably, I am only in the fairer way to be more a Brute.

Philot. Underſtanding! Mony will buy good Books, and though the Owner ſhould ſhould not know how to uſe them, yet if has an Eſtate, he will never want People to make him believe he has Senſe, which will be in a manner as well, for Pleaſure conſiſts moſtly in Fancy.

Philal. I don't envy ſuch a one the entertainment of his Imagination, though I believe it is much ſhort of the tranſports of Lunacy: but withal I think that folly and madneſs are no proper Judges to pronounce upon the Advancements of human Nature. But to return to the Argument, no perſon can be Great by being Owner of thoſe things which wiſe Men have always counted it a piece of greatneſs to deſpiſe. To which I muſt add, that it is not the poſſeſſing, but the right management of any valuable Advantage which makes us Conſiderable. He that does not employ his Fortune generouſly, is not to be reſpected merely becauſe he has it. Indeed if a Man gives me part of his Eſtate, I am bound to make him an acknowledgment; but I am not obliged to honor him becauſe he is pleaſed to keep it to himſelf.

Philot. Well! Since Merchandize is ſometimes liable to exceptions, and antient Wealth has no right to challenge Worſhip, and Homage. Pray what do you think of Nobility raiſed by Arms? I hope here you will grant

grant the Materials are all ſhining, and ſolid. And when an Anceſtour works out his Fortune by great and hazardous Undertakings, by contempt of Danger and Death, and all the inſtances of an Heroick Gallantry; is it not highly reaſonable his Deſcendants ſhould ſhare his Honor, as well as his Inheritance? Nay, they ſeem obliged, in juſtice to his Memory, to have ſome ſtroaks of Greatneſs and Reſerve in their Carriage. They might better be Profuſe in their Expences, than their Familiarities. The waſting his Eſtate, and razing him out of the Heralds Books, is ſcarce more injurious to his Name, than the heedleſs Condeſcenſions of his Family. For by ſuch ill managed Humility, they do as it were Proſtitute his Quality, mingle his Aſhes with ignoble Duſt, and deface the Monuments and Diſtinctions of his Merit.

Philal. I confeſs a Man ought to be civil to his Generation, but not to that degree as to plague the Living, only in Ceremony to the Dead. And I may ſay farther, that a Noble Anceſtor; does not deſire his Poſterity ſhould pretend to honor him this way, except his Qualities, as well as his Name deſcend upon them. A perſon truly Great, is never fond and unreaſonable; he hates to ſee Folly Idolized, though it be in his own Children; and had rather have his Memory buried in

Oblivion, than his Honor ſhould be Uſurped by a Degenerate inſignificant Off-ſpring. Beſides, the reaſons you aſſign why Martial Men ought to be valued by after-Ages, ſeem to be common to other pretences to Nobility.

Philot. I am ſorry if they appear ſo, ſince I deſigned them chiefly for the advantage of Arms. For in my judgment, the Profeſſion of a Soldier has a particular, and paramount Title to Honor. For can there be a more extraordinary inſtance of Greatneſs, than for a Man to be undiſmayed amidſt ſo many horrible Inſtruments and Images of Death? To expoſe his perſon as freely as if he knew himſelf immortal, and to fear nothing but Obſcurity and Diſgrace? And therefore though there are many other creditable Employments and Accompliſhments, yet there is a tranſcendent, and almoſt an aſtoniſhing Greatneſs and Gracefulneſs in Valour. It has ſomething more illuſtrious and ſparkling, more Noble and Majeſtick than the reſt.

Philal. Hold! You are going to deſcribe *Alexander* or *Ceſar*; do you think that every *Field*, or *Charge* in *Gules*, can pretend to all theſe fine things? This muſt be examined farther by and by: at preſent I ſhall only obſerve to you, that though I have a great eſteem for a Gentleman of the Sword, and don't in the leaſt intend to leſſen the juſt Character of Military Glory; yet I conceive there is another Profeſſion,

feſſion, which poſſibly does not glitter altogether ſo much upon the Senſe, but for all that, if you touch it 'twill prove right Sterling.

Philot. What Profeſſion do you mean?

Philal. That of Learning; therefore if you pleaſe, I will juſt glance upon the Advantages of Learning without interpoſing my judgment by way of compariſon.

Philot. Do ſo, for I think you had need ſay ſome kind things upon this Argument, to make amends for the freedom you took with it in our former Conference.

Philal. Don't miſtake me, I am conſcious of no Injury, and therefore deſign nothing by way of Reparation.

Philot. Take your Courſe.

Philal. 1. Then not to mention that Learning is an improvement of our Minds, which is the nobleſt part of us. I ſay not to mention this, you may pleaſe to take notice, that without ſome ſhare in this accompliſhment, War it ſelf cannot be ſucceſsfully managed. Without the aſſiſtance of Letters, a Man can never be qualified for any conſiderable Poſt in the Camp. For Courage and Corporal Force, unleſs joyned with Conduct, and reach of Thought (which are the uſual effects of Contemplation) is no more fit to command than a Tempeſt; doing for the moſt part more harm than good, and deſtroying it ſelf by its blind and ill directed motion.

It's

It is Learning which teaches a General the ſucceſſes and events of Action in former Ages, which makes him better able to judge of his preſent preparation. It inſtructs him how to take advantage of his Enemies, and avoid thoſe miſcarriages which have been fatal to others before him. It teaches him how to Fortifie and Aſſault, how to manage the difference of Ground and Weather. It lets him into the knowledge of Human Nature, and ſhews him how to underſtand the Tempers of other men, and to govern his own. It diſcovers by what ſecret Springs the Paſſions are moved, what are the moſt probable Cauſes of Hope and Fear, of Reſolution and Cowardiſe; and how ſtrangely they are mixed, and varied according to the difference of Climates, Governments, Conditions, and Occupations, eſpecially according to the different Age, Temper, Intereſt, and Experience of thoſe who are in Power.

Philot. Yes, no doubt it teaches a Man to take a Soul in pieces, as eaſily as a Watch! If ever I heard ſuch Conjuring!

Philal. Pray be not ſo ſharp, the Diſcourſe is not ſo Romantick as you ſuppoſe.

Philot. Go on.

Philal. Secondly, I obſerve that the Advantages of Learning are more laſting and extenſive than thoſe of Arms. The Courage of a Soldier, does his Country not much

ſervice

ſervice after his death, the benefit of it being uſually confined to one Age: whereas by the knowledge of Men and Things, Publick Proviſions for Society are framed, and the Conſtitution adjuſted to the Temper, and Convenience of the People; of the happy effects of which, remote Poſterity is often ſenſible. And as the Conſequences of Valour, ſeldom reach beyond the death of him who ſhewed it, ſo there are few the better for it, except thoſe a Man engages for; which are commonly none but his Countrymen. But Learning, by inventing and improving Arts and Sciences, ſcatters its Favours in a much larger compaſs; becomes a univerſal Benefactor, and obliges mankind in its moſt comprehenſive Latitude of Place and Time.

Philot. I hope you will grant that Learning muſt fly to the Protection of the Sword to ſecure its quiet, and all the profits accrewing from thence. For in earneſt, Notions, and Syllogiſms, are very defenceleſs things againſt Violence. If we had nothing but Philoſophy, Statutes and Reports, to ſecure the Peace; our *Meum* and *Tuum* were but in an ill condition.

Philal. I agree with you, and ſhall juſt add in the third place, That the ſucceſſes of Learning are naturally of a very innocent Tendency, and under good management prejudicial to none. The Conqueſts of Arts are not like

thoſe

thoſe of Arms, gained by ſlaughter, and attended with ruin and deſolation. No, Here is nothing routed but Ignorance and Error, nothing deſtroyed but obſtinate Humour, and ſavage Diſpoſition:

Emollit mores nec ſinit eſſe feros.

But a Martial Man, except he has been ſweetned, and poliſhed by a Lettered Education, is apt to have a tincture of ſowerneſs, and incomplyance in his Behaviour. And therefore if you obſerve your old Heroes in *Homer*, (for want of being Book-Learned) were none of the Gentileſt Men. What a rugged tempeſtuous, unconverſable Mortal was *Achilles*; I could never fancy that ſame πόδας ὠκὺς.

Philot. Well! I perceive it is requiſite for a Man to get ſome Senſe to his Courage if he can: but have we not loſt all our Pride, and gone ſomewhat off from the Point?

Philal. No, We have only fetched a Compaſs, and thrown our reaſoning more into a Circle to inveſt the Place; and now we will come on directly, and make a little Aſſault, only to try the ſtrength of the Garriſon.

Philot. Very Soldier-like! In plain *Engliſh* I doubt you are attempting to ſhew that it is not ſo much the Profeſſion of Arms, as the unexceptionable management of that Profeſſion which makes a Family honourable.

Philal.

Philal. Yes. Therefore before we fall too much in love with the Buff in the Wardrobe; we ſhould examin whether the War was juſt, whether our Anceſtor fought in defence of his Prince and Country, or let himſelf out to any perſon who would hire him to murther. We ſhould conſider whether the Enterprize was Great and Dangerous; whether the Advantages were gained by open Bravery and Reſolution, or were no more than the effects of Chance, of Treachery, or Surprize. And though a Man can give a creditable Anſwer to all theſe Queſtions, he ſhould then remember there are a great many perſons who have ventured as far as himſelf, and yet continue in their firſt Obſcurity: ſo that had it not been his good Fortune to have fallen under the Notice of his General, his Merit had been unrewarded. There are many perſons who perform ſignal ſervice in a Breach, or Scalado, and yet their Courage is often unregarded, and loſt in the Crowd, and Tumult of the Action, ſo that they get nothing but Blows for their Pains. To wind up this part of the Diſcourſe: let the Riſe of the Family be never ſo conſiderable (I mean none but Subjects) it ought not to ſuperſede the Induſtry, or ſtop the Progreſs of thoſe who are thence Deſcended. For if we rely wholly upon the Merit of others, and are Great only by imputation, we ſhall be eſteemed by none but

but the injudicious part of the World. To ſpeak out, if neither the advantages of Fortune and Education (which often concur in theſe Caſes) the expectation of others, nor the Memory of worthy Anceſtors, if none of theſe Motives can prevail with a Man to furniſh himſelf with Supravulgar and Noble Qualities, this is an argument that he is either under a natural incapacity, or elſe has abandoned himſelf to Sloth, and Luxury. And without diſpute he is moſt emphatically mean, who is ſo under the greateſt advantages and arguments to the contrary. So that the Luſtre of his Family ſerves only to ſet off his own Degeneracy, it does *Facem præferre pudendis* and makes him the more remarkably Contemptible.

Philot. You are ſmart upon the empty Sparks! And I perceive by your diſcourſe that if we intend to ſet up ſtrong, we muſt do ſomething for our ſelves.

Philal. Yes: And therefore I preſume that Women have more reaſon to inſiſt upon their Birth than Men: becauſe they have not ſo fair a trial to diſcover their worth. They are by cuſtom made incapable of thoſe employments by which Honour is uſually gain'd. They are ſhut out from the Pulpit and Barr, from Embaſſies, and State Negotiations, ſo that notwithſtanding (as I believe it often happens) their Inclinations are generous, and

their

their Abilities great, to ſerve the publick; yet they have not an opportunity of ſhewing it.

Philot. Truly I think you need not have been ſo liberal to the *Beau-Sex*; you know they have enough to be proud of beſides Heraldry.

Philal. What do you mean?

Philot. Their Beauty Man.

Philal. Right, I believe that may diſturb them ſometimes; but they have no great reaſon for it. For Beauty though it's a pretty varniſh, yet it's of a frail Conſtitution, liable to abundance of Accidents, and but a ſhort lived Bleſſing at the beſt. And waving this Conſideration, it ſeems to be made chiefly for the entertainment of the lookers on. Thoſe who are ſo much admired by others, can't ſhare the pleaſure of the Company without the help of a Glaſs; for the Eyes which ſhew us other Objects cannot ſee themſelves. Nature ſeems to have laid the moſt graceful parts of our Fabrick out of our way; to prevent our vanity. For could ſome People always command a ſight of their Faces, they would *Narciſſus* like be perpetually poring upon their Handſomeneſs, and ſo be neither fit for Buſineſs, nor Company.

Philot. To my thinking you have not cleared the Point; For why may we not

inſiſt

inſiſt upon the privileges of Nature? Why ſhould a fine Woman be ſo prodigal of her Beauty, make ſtrip and waſte of her Complexion, and ſquander away her Face for nothing? There is no reaſon perſons of a leſs agreeable aſpect (except they have ſome other advantage) ſhould converſe with beauty upon a Level. For thoſe who cannot furniſh out an equal proportion towards the pleaſure of Converſation, ought to pay for their inſufficiency in Acknowledgments. Beauty without doubt was deſign'd for ſome advantage, and if ſo, certainly the Owners have the beſt right to it.

Philal. I grant it; and therefore it's allowable for them to ſet a value upon their Perſons, for the better diſpoſal of them. And farther if they have a mind to it, they may pleaſe themſelves, becauſe they are acceptable to others, which is a generous ſatisfaction: But when they grow humourſom they ſpoil all; For Pride not only raiſes a prejudice againſt their Beauty, but really leſſens it. For if you obſerve, it paints an ill-natured Air upon their Face; and fills them with ſpleen and peeviſhneſs and paſſion, which exhauſts their Spirits, and makes their blood leſs florid, ſo that their Beauty is neither ſo agreeable nor laſting as otherwiſe it would be. And if the preſent inconvenience will not cure them, they will do well to remember

ber that they must of necessity grow humble when they are old; unless they are so fanciful as to doat upon Rubbish and Ruins.

Philot. Pray let us take leave of the Ladies, and proceed to the other branch of your Division, *viz.* to acquired Nobility. And here methinks every thing looks unexceptionable and fine upon your own Principles. For here we are beholden to none but our selves; we are not thrown up the Hill by anothers Arms, and made considerable by Diversion, or Chancemedly; but climb the ascent by plain Strength, and indefatigable Activity. Is it not a singular commendation to have our circumstances not only large and Honourable, but Independent; and almost to create the privileges we enjoy? Here is no gilding of a coarse substance, no borrowed Glory, no faint Reflection from an Ancestour, but the Man is all bright and luminous to the Center, and shines and sparkles in his own worth. He is not Great by Genealogy and ancient Title, by the Favour of Fortune and the Labours of those he never help'd, but by Nature and Performances, by having Greatness incorporated in himself. Now may not a Person who has thus distinguished himself by his Merit, make use of the Honour which has been so justly confer'd upon him, and put the Lazy and less significant in mind of their Defects?

Philal. If you recollect your ſelf you will find that this point concerning Acquired Nobility has been occaſionally diſcourſed already: Therefore I ſhall only add that upon ſuppoſition a Man has obliged the Publick, and is remarkable for great Abilities and a generous Uſe of them; he would do well to remember that there are others who have ventured as far, and performed as conſiderably as himſelf, whoſe Services all miſcarried as to any private Advantage, becauſe they were not ſo lucky as to act under the Notice of thoſe who were able to reward: And that many Perſons well furniſh'd for Employment and Honour, go out of the World as obſcurely as they came in; only for want of a proper opportunity to bring them into Light, and publick View.

Philot. What tho ſome People are unlucky, ought their misfortunes to be pleaded to the prejudice of Deſert in others?

Philal. No. But when a man has received ſo valuable a conſideration for his Service as Honour and Eſtate, he ought to acquieſce, and not preſs too arbitrarily for Submiſſion. He ſhould not ſet a tax upon his Converſation, and put the Company under Contribution for Reſpect. Beſides a Gentleman of the firſt *Head* has a particular reaſon to manage his Advancement obligingly: For by treating the little People roughly, he does in effect but expoſe his Anceſtours and reproach his own former Condition.

Philot.

Philot. You have ſo many fetches with you! But what do you think of Magiſtrates? In my opinion thoſe who repreſent their Prince, and are the Miniſters of Juſtice, cannot practiſe that Humility and Condeſcenſion you ſeem to admire, with any manner of Decency, or Security to the publick. For if they don't oblige their Inferiours to Diſtance, their Reputation will ſink, and the Majeſty of the Government will be leſſen'd, and then it's eaſie to gueſs what the conſequence muſt be.

Philal. I agree with you: Magiſtrates ought to aſſert their Office, and not make themſelves cheap by improper Familiarities. But their Character may be over-ſtrained. To prevent which inconvenience they may pleaſe to remember that their power was given them upon a publick account, more for the benefit of others than themſelves. They are deputed by their Prince, for the countenancing of Virtue, for the eaſe and Protection of the People, and therefore they ſhould diſcourage none who are regular and fair, they ſhould ſhew their Authority upon nothing but Inſolence and Injuſtice, Thieves and Malefactors; upon thoſe who affront the Government, or break the Peace. There is no neceſſity they ſhould bring the Air of the Bench into common Converſation, and wear their Commiſſions always upon their Faces.

To manage their Power thus ſingularly looks like a little private Deſign of ſetting up for themſelves; as if they procured their Authority to fright the Kings Liege Subjects, and to over-awe the Neighbourhood into a greater Reverence.

Philot. But if they ſhould happen to take too much upon them, are the People to ſlight them upon this account?

Philal. By no means: the Authority ought to be conſider'd let the Men be what they will. However in general I obſerve that the beſt way to ſecure Obſervance, is not to inſiſt too violently upon it. For Pride is a moſt unfortunate Vice, other Immoralities uſually gain their Point, though they loſe more another way; but a Proud man is ſo far from making himſelf Great by his haughty and contemptuous Port, that he is uſually puniſhed with Neglect for it: and that Diſdain with which he treats others, is returned more juſtly upon himſelf: which may be done without much difficulty, in regard Honor is not become a property ſo far as to have all it's Appurtenances bounded and fix'd by Law. The Circumſtantials and oftentimes the moſt pompous part of Ceremony, are arbitrary and undetermined. For we are not told either by Statute, or Common Law how many Bows a Superiour of ſuch a degree may expect from us,

us, nor how low we are to make them, nor how often the terms of Reſpect are to be uſed in our Application.

Philot. What do you mean?

Philal. I mean that it is not ſettled by Act of Parliament, how many Sirs and Madams, a Diſcourſe of ſuch a length is to be ſprinkled with; and therefore a croſs-grained Fellow, will tell you he has his Betters upon their Good Behaviour: if he likes their humour, he will be as liberal to them in acknowledgments as they pleaſe; if not, he ſhall take the freedom to hold his hand, and let them help themſelves how they can.

Philot. Well! I cannot reconcile this ſelf-denying Humour you are contending for to the Character of a Gentleman. Such an untoward management of Fortune and Honour as this is, argues either that a Man wants Senſe to underſtand his Condition, or Spirit to maintain it. To throw away the Prerogatives of our Birth, or the rewards of our Induſtry, at ſuch a careleſs Cynical rate, is a ſign of a Ruſtick inapprehenſive meanneſs, and that we have not the leaſt inclination to Greatneſs in us. For thoſe who deſire to be Great, will endeavour to excel, and thoſe who excel will be ſure to ſhew it; for the Eſſence of Greatneſs lies in Compariſon. A tall Man loſes the advantage of his Stature, unleſs he ſtands ſtreight, and overlooks his Neighbour.

Philal. Methinks you are ſomewhat out in your notion of Greatneſs.

Philot. Let us hear if you can hit it better.

Philal. To ſpeak freely, I conceive it a much more ſubſtantial and better natured thing than you have made it. Greatneſs certainly does not conſiſt in Pageantry and Show, in Pomp and Retinue; and though a perſon of Quality will make uſe of theſe things to avoid Singularity, and to put the Vulgar in mind of their obedience to Authority, yet he does not think himſelf really the bigger for them: for he knows that thoſe who have neither Honeſty nor Underſtanding, have oftentimes all this fine Furniture about them. Farther, To be Great, is not to be ſtarched, and formal, and ſupercilious, to ſwagger at our Footmen, and browbeat our Inferiours. Such a Behaviour looks as if a Man was conſcious of his own inſignificancy, and that he had nothing but Outſide, and Noiſe, and ill Humour, to make himſelf Conſiderable with. But he that is truly Noble, has far different Sentiments, and turns his Figure quite another way. He hates to abridge the Liberties, to depreſs the Spirits, or any ways to impair the ſatisfaction of his Neighbour. His Greatneſs is eaſie, obliging, and agreeable, ſo that none have any juſt cauſe to wiſh it leſs. And though he has a general kindneſs for all Men, though he deſpiſes not the meaneſt

eſt Mortal, but deſires to ſtand fair in the Opinion of the World, yet he never courts any Man's Favour at the Expence of Juſtice, nor ſtrikes in with a Popular Miſtake. No, He is ſenſible it is the part of true Magnanimity to adhere unalterably to a wiſe Choice: not to be over-run by Noiſe and Numbers, but to appear in defence of injured Right, of neglected Truth, notwithſtanding all the Cenſure and Diſadvantage they may ſometimes lie under. To conclude his Character, A Great Man is affable in his Converſe, generous in his Temper, and immoveable in what he has maturely reſolved upon. And as Proſperity does not make him haughty and imperious, ſo neither does Adverſity ſink him into meanneſs and dejection: for if ever he ſhews more ſpirit than ordinary, it is when he is ill uſed, and the World frowns upon him. In ſhort, he is equally removed from the extremes of Servility and Pride; and ſcorns either to trample upon a Worm, or ſneak to an Emperor.

Philot. In earneſt, you have deſcribed a Perſon of Honor: And I am ſo far pleaſed with the Character, that I would give all I am Maſter of to make it my own. But can we receive no other Advantages from Nobility, but what have been hinted already?

Philal. All that I can think of at preſent, are theſe following.

Firſt, It gives a fair occaſion to excite the generoſity of our Minds, and diſpoſes us to the imitation of great Examples, that ſo we may not ſeem unworthy our Predeceſſours. Indeed, a Man is bound in juſtice not to impair the Reputation, nor ſpoil the Breed of the Family: but to hand down the Line to his Poſterity, at leaſt with the ſame good Conditions he received it.

Secondly, Theſe Privileges of Birth may ſerve to check an inſolent Humour in others, who behave themſelves contemptuouſly towards us upon leſſer, or but equal pretences.

Thirdly, A Man may make ſome Advantage this way, when he falls undeſervedly under Publick Diſgrace, or is unrighteouſly Oppreſſed. For in ſuch a Caſe, the mention of his Anceſtours ſeems free from all ſuſpicion of Vanity, and may fairly be interpreted to proceed either from ſelf-Defence, or greatneſs of Spirit.

Fourthly, The ſame may be done when any Office or Promotion, may Legally be claimed by vertue of an honourable Condition. For example, If a Man ſhould put in to be one of the Knights of *Malta*, he might modeſtly enough publiſh his Pedigree, and prove his ſix Deſcents, againſt a leſs qualified Competitor.

Philot. If you are at a ſtop, I think I can carry your conceſſions ſomewhat farther. For,

as

as I remember, it has been granted already, that the common People may pay a Reſpect to Quality, though you mortifie the Pleaſure a little ſeverely in thoſe who receive it.

Philal. May pay a Reſpect, call you it? I ſay they muſt. For not to mention that Gentlemen have generally a greater ſhare of Fortune and Senſe too, than thoſe of vulgar Condition; not to mention this I ſay, if they had nothing to plead but their Quality, they ought to be regarded upon that Score, becauſe the State ſets a value upon it, and that for publick and conſiderable Reaſons.

Philot. I perceive if a Man will but ſtay and hear you out, you are civil enough at the laſt. Pray what are we to do next?

Philal. Why, now I could run a Diſcourſe with you upon the inconveniences of Pride: and ſhew you in particular, what an unconquerable Averſion it gives all Mankind againſt us, when we are overgrown with it. How it multiplies, and conceals our Defects from us, and makes us do a thouſand ſilly things, without taking notice of them. How it makes us a Prey to Flatterers, and puts us to great Expences only to be laughed at. I might debate with you, how it ſpoils Converſation, and takes away the pleaſure of Society. How often Families, Kingdoms, and Churches are embroiled, and the World turned topſiturvy by this Vice. Theſe and many other ill conſequences

ſequences of Pride might be enlarged upon; but this part of the Argument is, I conceive, more proper for Divines, and therefore I ſhall purſue it no farther.

Philot. Well moved! For now I think it is almoſt time to give over.

Philal. I won't tire you.

Your humble Servant.

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